THE COMMONWEAL

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

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THE PROBLEM OF PACIFISM

WHEN uncompromising pacifism can be adopted by more than 10,000 Protestant clergymen, it is evident that a problem of portentous gravity is developing. This fact is only one of the many extraordinary circumstances brought to light by the questionnaire which is summarized in the May issue of the *World Tomorrow,* a journal which describes its attitude as "looking toward a social order based on the religion of Jesus." The questionnaire, which was sent to 53,000 Protestant ministers, was prepared by such well-known religious leaders as Dr. S. Parkes Cadman, Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, Reverend Daniel A. Poling, Reverend Ralph W. Sockman, Reinhold Niebuhr, W. Russell Bowie, John Nevin Sayre, Sherwood Eddy, William Pierson Merrill and Kirby Page. The last is the editor of the *World Tomorrow,* and is also the author, or compiler, of "National Defense," a study of the origins, results and prevention of war.

More than 19,000 replies were received, which fact itself shows the unusual interest manifested in the questions proposed. More than 12,000 clergymen, or 62 percent of those who responded, declared that the churches of America should now go on record as refusing to sanction or support any future war. More than 10,000, or 54 percent, stated that it was their present purpose, as individuals, not to sanction any future war, or participate as armed combatants. More than 6,000 carried their opposition to war so far as to declare that they could not conscientiously serve the country as an official army chaplain on active duty in wartime. On this point, however, there was more doubt displayed than in any other question: 3,721 were unable to make up their minds, while 8,700 stated their willingness for chaplain duty.

Eight questions in all were put before the clergymen. The first asked them if they would favor the immediate entrance of the United States into the League of Nations. More than 12,000 answered in the affirmative; more than 3,000 were in doubt; while 3,000 others answered in the negative. The second question concerned military training in the public high schools and civilian colleges or universities. More than 16,000 are opposed; with 2,574 approving of the practice; 677 in doubt. Even if the United States should be "compelled to take the initiative and make a proportionately greater reduction than other nations are yet willing to do," in reductions in armaments, more than 15,000 Protestant clergymen are in favor of such a course.

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More than 12,000 also declared in favor of the abandonment of "the policy of armed intervention in other lands by our government to protect the lives and property of American citizens"; with nearly 4,000 still favoring such a policy, or willing to leave the matter in the hands of the government; while more than 3,000 others were in doubt.

In seeking to determine the real significance of the results of this questionnaire, which undoubtedly will attract wide and serious attention, there are several relevant factors which should be kept in mind, as the editor of the *World Tomorrow* points out. In the first place, several important religious bodies are not represented, a fact which makes the headlines on the front page, which read, "The Church on War and Peace," more than a little inaccurate. The same slogan was used by the individuals issuing the birth control report of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America recently. By what process of reasoning the individual opinions of small or large groups, or committees, can be termed the utterances of "The Church" is far from clear. The Jews, the Lutherans, the Southern Baptists, the Southern Methodists and the Catholics were not asked to participate in this questionnaire. It should also be remembered that in all likelihood it is true that "the ministers who are most vigorous in their opposition to war replied in larger proportions than did their less interested colleagues." This means that the ministry as a whole is probably less hostile to the war system than their replies would seem to indicate, and undoubtedly it is also true that "allowance should be made for the fact that many persons who now say that they will not sanction or support any future war may change their minds if confronted with an actual crisis, when passions are inflamed and fears aroused. It is obvious, therefore, that extreme caution should be observed in condemning the validity of a particular point of view by citing these summaries."

We fully agree with this last remark; nevertheless, it is probable that the creed of outright pacifism has gained a growth hitherto unsuspected, when it is remembered that the pacifist position is still highly unpopular, and comes potentially at least into direct conflict with the principles on which all governments are founded. It is also significant that the replies from theological seminaries were even more radically pacifist than those from the ordained and practising clergymen. In the case of the seminaries, 79 percent of the replies were in favor of the churches of America going on record as refusing to sanction or support any future war; while 72 percent of the individual seminaries take the pacifist position personally. Only 27 percent of these future leaders of the Protestant groups they represent at present believe that they could conscientiously serve their country as official army chaplains on active duty in wartime.

The *World Tomorrow* itself raises the question as to the fundamental significance of the attitude of the churches. "Can they do anything that will be effective in preventing another war?" The *World Tomorrow* answers its own question as follows: "Yes, for the reason that morale is all important in modern war. The united and enthusiastic support of a nation's citizens is essential to success. The passionate conviction that war is absolutely necessary in order to protect women and children, safeguard property, and uphold noble ideals, is essential to high morale. The churches have always been relied upon to hallow a combat with the stamp of morality and religion. If the government knew in advance that a large percentage of ministers would go to jail rather than support another war, it would be doubly eager to find a pacific solution for all discussions with all nations."

The denominations whose ministers were questioned comprised the Methodist Episcopal, the Presbyterian, the Congregationalist, the Protestant Episcopal, the Baptist, Disciples of Christ, the Reformed Churches, the United Brethren, the Evangelical Synod, the Unitarian and Universalist, and a miscellaneous group. It can be taken for granted that not only the Protestant groups not questioned, but the Jewish groups as well, and, of course, the Catholic Church, are just as concerned with this momentous issue, and equally resolved to do all that is legitimately within their power to do to prevent another war. Only a few weeks ago, Pope Pius XI solemnly and publicly warned nations against another war, declaring that it would be the committing of suicide. Probably most of the questions asked by the questionnaire would be answered by Catholics more or less along the same divided lines as they were by the Protestant clergymen; for example, such questions as whether the United States should enter into the League of Nations. But absolute pacifism is contrary to Catholic doctrine. Probably the most extreme statement of the Catholic peace attitude has been given by Father Franziskus Strattman, a German Dominican, in his recent book on the Church and war. Without, of course, denying that there can be just wars —for to deny that would be to oppose the consistent teaching of the Church through the centuries—Father Strattman, after enumerating ten points which if adhered to would fulfill the conditions of a just war, as laid down by Catholic theologians, comes to this conclusion: "If we consider the conditions which justify a war from the standard of Catholic morality, we find that war is almost an impossibility." This is for the reason that the actual conditions which surround modern warfare make it exceedingly difficult to apply the standards of morality. But an acutely important question still remains, namely, how far and to what extent are individuals or organized groups of individuals justified in taking a position absolutely condemning all wars as inherently immoral? It would seem to us that this is a position impossible for the Catholic Church to assume; for that Church agrees with the common sense of mankind in holding that war is not always evil, and that a just war—such as one of defense against aggression—must be supported as a strict duty of citizenship.

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WEEK BY WEEK

THE MOST remarkable thing about the Spanish revolution, so far, has been its peaceful nature. For this, if no other reasons, we believe that great credit should go to Alfonso. He is well known to be highly intelligent, as well as personally likable. In spite of the antiquity and traditions of his dynasty, consideration of which might naturally have prompted an intransigent attitude, he did not force a conflict. Established authority, whether king, or constitutional government, or Soviet dictator, almost without exception in history conscientiously expresses and defends the position, "I am the law." Alfonso, however, evidently supplied with reliable information, forced no bloodshed when his vested authority was faced by an opposition which vested authority traditionally labels treason. He had the intelligence to weigh this oposition judiciously, and to estimate correctly that though it was outside the pale of existing law, it had the inevitable, arithmetical balance of force that would make it the law of tomorrow. In the light of these reflections, his actions were truly extraordinarily rational and humane. "His Most Catholic Majesty," as he was called, acted indeed in a manner that reflects everlasting credit on his Faith and that queen of virtues, Christian charity.

Catholic Spain

WITH regard to Spain's future, much can be said, little definitely known. Republican authorities so far show a moderation and patriotism which would seem to promise that the king's renunciation was in no sense a betrayal of the interests of his people. Plans for a popular election of government officials are being rapidly matured, with evidently no intention of the present Republican leaders to seize the reins of power in the familiar demagogic guise of themselves being the only true and trustworthy defenders and champions of the people. Obviously at such a time there will be many conflicts of opinion and of interests. But already the intense regional spheres of tradition and dialect in Spain, have shown an inclination to solve their differences by a federal union for the purposes of foreign affairs, defense and tariffs on international trade. The position of the Church will obviously, to say the least, be subject to disturbance for some time. In particular instances, it will no doubt be the object of personal animosities, as it will no doubt have within it individuals who with excess of zeal will be unable to dissociate their political loyalties from their spiritual loyalty. One may be equally sure that the Church will successfully pursue the narrow and perilous path between the opposed dangers. Our personal convictions are that Spain which historically has been identified in the eyes of the world with the desperate and bloody struggle of Christendom against the invasions of Islam from Northern Africa and subsequently with 400 years of intense colonial competition with England, which has given rise to a disproportioned legend of Spanish brutality, will surprise the world by the unbloody and intelligent manner in which it will resolve its new problems. This is devoutly to be prayed for that it may justify a title to being a "Most Catholic Country."

WITH revolt spreading in Honduras, next door to Nicaragua, only a few days after Secretary Stimson's now famous declaration to American citizens that their lives could not be protected beyond the range of American gunboats off the coast of Nicaragua, a new United States policy in Central America seemed launched on a troubled beginning. Senator Borah and, judging by newspaper polls of sentiment, the majority of the Senate, were for the first time in a long while in agreement with the administration, when Secretary Stimson first announced what seemed to be the new policy of not guaranteeing to follow adventurous Americans with marines and machine guns, no matter into what thickets and jungles their enterprise took them. We believe that it can safely be said that the preponderance of sentiment in the United States was with the administration in its earlier decision that the marines would be withdrawn from Nicaragua. It has been pointed out with some justice that more citizens of foreign countries are killed in a month in Chicago than suffer a like fate in Central America in a year; and that, in spite of conditions in Chicago not abating, but yearly getting worse, and investigations revealing lamentable uncertainties in the police and judicial efficacy to cope with the situation, foreign countries have not attempted to land their marines on our shores, or send punitive expeditions into central United States after Mr. Capone.

Murder Abroad

YET, WHEN allegedly peaceful American citizens are shot from ambush we do feel the government should do more than write a note about it. From one quarter an eminent economist has suggested that American citrus fruit growers in Florida and California, would be glad to see our nationals out of the banana-growing countries, so that the subsequent drop in banana importation might mean a greater consumption of grapefruits and oranges. This of course is fantastic, as are the rumors of the troubles in Central America being inspired in order to keep our marines in there. Extraterritorial rights are in a state of flux all over the world. Secretary Stimson's act had its precedent recently in China, where not only America, but all the powers, assumed to be able to protect their citizens only within range of their battleships. Our greatest wish in the present instance is that, if the United States is going to initiate a non-intervention policy in Latin American, that policy will be clearly defined and vigorously explained and executed. A wavering, misunderstood policy will have all the known disadvantages, and advantages for no one except bandits and enemies of society and government.

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AS HAD been anticipated, the steps taken by Germany and Austria to effect a tariff union are still being anxiously debated. In many respects it is, indeed, the most independent and arresting diplomatic action undertaken by these governments since the close of the war. This fact Paris was not slow to grasp; and since there has existed of late a considerable amount of opposition to the now traditional Briand policy, the event was ammunition to the enemies of the Premier and forced him to do a number of rather startling things. First, he prevailed upon Mr. Henderson, who is beset with grave anxiety lest French willingness to listen to his arguments on the subject of disarmament may diminish, to take a stand which almost all the British papers—and very likely the Foreign Office as well—frankly fail to support. Second, he threatened to resign from office, and suggested that Franco-German relations might change noticeably. Third, he succeeded in making the Poles (who until that time officially regarded the new pact with at least assumed indifference) issue something which savors of a protest. One may be sure that these and other actions would not have borne the Briand signature unless an influential section of French opinion had been genuinely annoyed. But is this annoyance the creation of a nationalistic political current or is it based upon concrete, justifiable fears? The answer is not easy. So long as the French regard union between Germany and Austria as a blow at their own interests, they can hardly avoid noticing the possible effects of the Curtius-Schober maneuver. This is all the more true since the arguments for union—*Anschluss*—are very good.

No End of a Disturbance

ON THE other hand, German sentiment is unanimously behind the assertion that the sole purpose of the new pact is the improvement of industrial conditions in central Europe. Now at last a move has been made, we are told, to end the "balkanization" of half the Continent—to wipe out tariff barriers which have seriously impeded trade. It is also argued that only in this way can the growing Russian competition in the markets of the world be encountered successfully. Historians remind us that many years prior to the war Brentano, the Bavarian economist, had urged an industrial alliance between Germany and Austria which might later be extended to other Balkan states. Other men took up the idea, so that there was no small amount of literature regarding it long before the issue of political union had even been thought of. However that may be, there seems in Germany little doubt that the present move is juridically sound and that neither the League of Nations nor the Hague Tribunal could take exception to it on the basis of existing treaties. The point has been well argued by the London *Times*, which draws a parallel between the industrial treaty signed by Belgium and Luxemburg and the pending agreement. Furthermore Dr. Schober, the Austrian instigator of this adventure, got the idea at Geneva.

A NOTE in the news tells us that the entire personnel of the United States army, the coast guard and the civil service, are now finger-printed, the prints being sent to the Bureau of Investigation in Washington, "there to be checked by criminal identification experts." This (says the item) is to keep these departments free from "undesirables"; last year in the civil service department alone, nearly one-fourteenth of the applicants were found to have "police records ranging from misdemeanor to murder." We hazard the guess that the majority were down at the misdemeanor end of the scale; it is tolerably hard for a man with a "police record" of murder to attain the measure of personal liberty that will enable him to apply for a position in the civil service. Plainly, we have little sympathy for this type of efficiency. What is to become of people with police records, if society does not answer their bid for an honest living, and absorb them into its economic structure? And if society has this duty, why should not the branches of the national service assume their share? They have their own tests and standards to which they exact conformity, their own systems for discovering and punishing malefactors in their ranks. If these operate properly, "undesirables" will be eliminated, or cured; if they do not, even candidates with finger-prints above reproach may turn into "undesirables." Over and above all this, we feel that the moral and psychological effect of finger-printing a whole body of respectable men, doing an important work for their country, will be deplorable. It is a symbol they are bound to resent. We are delighted to read that the navy refused to do it.

The Navy Refused

WHAT G. K. Chesterton calls the "atrocity trick" is still being worked for all it is worth, particularly by professional pacifists. The issue of the *World Tomorrow* containing the material dealt with in our leading editorial, has a conspicuously flagrant example. The title, "The Humane Allies," heads the following paragraph: "Here's a pleasant titbit which ought to be framed in gold. The French staff reports that they captured 2,000 of the rotten breed of Germans, pumped them dry of information, disarmed them, and then packed them off down a communication trench. A Zouave or two were waiting round a traverse and as each Deutsche filed past he was gracefully and neatly dispatched. The French don't want prisoners; all they want is scalps.—Captain C. Murray Childe, quoted in 'War Letters of Fallen Englishmen,' edited by Laurence Housman." Now, of course, that never happened. Two thousand German prisoners shot down in cold blood by "a Zouave or two," is simply a war lie, such as was told on both sides, and this one is obviously a vile example of a horrible type of war lie. But why should a pacifist journal keep up the circulation of such atrocity lies thirteen years after the war? Is it because any stick

Pacifist Psychology

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is good enough to hit "militaristic" France with? But how can they hope that France, or anybody else, will give heed to the pacifists when they will resort to this sort of twaddle? As Chesterton says, the "one thing that all the pacifists swore with one breath, in one voice of thunder, after the war, was that they would never, never, never again be bamboozled by tales about atrocities." How can they hope to bamboozle others?

Manganese and Mother Love

A SCIENTIST fed some female rats a manganese-free diet, and observed that they thereupon "showed no maternal solicitude for their young." In summing up these facts before a meeting of his colleagues in Baltimore, he was unable to resist adding: "For the present, it gives a bare clew that some of our most highly valued social instincts may depend on such trifles as the presence of infinitesimal amounts of certain substances in our food." Whereat headline writers regaled the nation with large-type variations of the proposition that "manganese causes mother love." Whether this is actually going beyond what is implied by the word "depend" in the above quotation, we leave our readers to judge. What we wish (with all possible mildness) to do, is to utter a few reminders, just to keep the record straight. We are certainly not equipped to compete with any scientist in his own field; in the case in question, we know nothing of manganese, and precious little of rats. But we do know as much as normal beings generally about human personality; and when (somewhat surprisingly) the discussion leaps from the behavior of rats under highly specialized conditions to "*our* social instincts," and thence to "mother love," it has entered the field of human personality.

NOW, MOTHER love is a function of human personality. Human personality undeniably works, as an integral condition, through the human body, and may be seriously impeded or deranged, according to bodily states. But these are hardly facts that we have waited until 1931 to find out. Lunatic asylums have been with us a long time; the phenomenon of starving men turned cannibals is not precisely new. The entire tradition and philosophy of the mass of civilized men regarding free will and the soul has developed in spite of this admitted fact of the often tragic, often mysterious, incidence of the body upon the mind. And, therefore, we object to having a fresh demonstration of this fact (if the findings of the scientist in question actually constitute a demonstration) stated with at least the implication that it is in a new category, and conclusive of determinism. We would not use taller words than the occasion warrants, but we should like to have an answer to these questions: Why do theories inimical, directly or obliquely, to human dignity and responsibility get themselves formulated so easily? And why does even the reputable press gobble them up with such relish?

REBIRTH OF THE MEDIAEVAL

WE HAVE recently referred to the brotherhood of man being extensive not only throughout the world today but also through the ages. And we have regretted that modern attitude which assumes with more vanity than wisdom that modern man is the pinnacle and finest product of creation who scorns as something crude and poorly fashioned the men, and women, of the generations that have gone. This attitude, a probable conclusion springing from the popular conception of evolution, which conceives of modernity as a golden age, an age especially blessed with information (sometimes called science), and with intelligence and comforts, while ages past were by comparison dark, superstition-ridden, and unclean and uncomfortable, is in fact, as vanity always is, isolating and somewhat pitiful. Its growth was coincident with the industrial revolution. It occurs to us that it is the true opiate of the people, the masses of the people, the factory people, the peoples of the slums and tenements that followed upon the great urban trek to the manufacturing centers. It is an opiate of consolation to such people in the dull routine of their lives and in the midst of the ugliness and squalor and noise in which they live.

In our own country the evidences of how shallow is this modernist assumption are mostly one-sided, as the country had its greatest development after the industrial revolution. Still in the country may be found some of the colonial houses, in New England the village greens around which clustered the white and grey shingled and clapboard homes which in the immediate past have been raided for antiques, in the South the splendid manor houses and parks of the old plantations, and in the West the adobe buildings of the Spanish settlers; and in the cities some remains, now usually artists' quarters, of the spacious and gracefully proportioned and ornamented homes of the past. In England only a casual comparison of the old villages and the old manors and castles with the modern bungalow and apartment centers, is enough to give one reflective apprehensions, and in some cases a somewhat vague nostalgia which is apt to be injurious to initiative, or at the least to temper it. In the old countries of the Continent the evidence is the same, and stretches further back into antiquity.

In this mood we might with reluctance admit even as much as does Sir Gilbert Murray in a passage which James Westfall Thompson quotes in the introduction to his monumental work on the middle ages: "Try to compare our inventions, our material civilization, and our stores of accumulated knowledge with those of the age of Aeschylus or Aristotle or Saint Francis and the comparison is absurd. Our superiority is beyond question and beyond measure. But compare any chosen poet of our age with Aeschylus, any philosopher with Aristotle, any saintly preacher with Saint Francis, and the result is totally different. . . ." And we might add from the same source, a reflection from Hoffding's

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"History of Modern Philosophy": "It dawned upon men (in the middle ages) that the spiritual world is just as much a reality as the material world, and that in the former is man's true home. . . . It would be erroneous to regard the middle ages as an age of utter darkness. Not only did there unfold within as well as without the official rule of the Church a cheerful and natural national life which has left a memorial behind it in the revivification of national literatures, but within the world of learning itself it would be extremely difficult to draw any clear line of demarcation between the middle ages and the time of the Renaissance."

In spite of the popular, but decreasingly popular, attitude of modernism which foolishly isolates itself from the magnificent traditions of history, the widening of interest in the middle ages which has been a phenomenon of the last decade presages a renaissance for our century. Instead of an awakening virility in culture and art, and a quickening *joie de vivre,* based on pagan antiquity, the new renaissance would be based on the rediscovery of the highly developed art and intelligence of the middle ages. Quite the opposite of having a repressive or reactionary effect on human thoughts and emotions—as the self-isolating moderns fear—these discoveries of a common humanity with preceding ages have an altogether cheerful and inspiring effect. The awakening of the spirit of understanding, of brotherhood, across the ages has an effect comparable to the feelings of joy when in the present two great nations discover a true community of understanding and coöperation.

Pioneers in this renaissance have this very week been meeting in New York. Five years ago the Mediaeval Academy of America was formed. Starting with an encouraging total of 761 members, this number had increased by the end of 1930 to 1,056, including not only American scholars but also the principal mediaevalists throughout the world. As long as this report is suddenly running to facts, it might further be stated that the Academy has raised an endowment fund of $60,000 and has a capital of over $37,000 for publishing books. One of the latest of these, "Guide to the Study of Mediaeval History," prepared by the late Louis John Paetow, and revised under the sponsorship of the Academy, will be published soon. Several other books have been brought out by the Academy and others are to appear. *Speculum,* the quarterly journal, has a well-merited international recognition.

A number of important projects of research have been sponsored by the Academy, and it is interesting to note that the excavations on the site of the Abbey Church in Cluny (Burgundy), for which the Academy had raised $25,000, was successful recently in the discovery of the sarcophagus of Saint Hughes, the celebrated abbot who died in the twelfth century. The Academy has also procured funds to carry on four cooperative studies of major scope.

A report sent to members the first of the year by Mr. Ralph Adams Cram, clerk of the Academy, gives an excellent estimate of the works of the society and the appreciation with which they are being received. "In recent years," wrote Mr. Cram, "studies of the middle ages have attracted American scholars more and more. An indication of how active American scholars are in this field may be obtained from awards recently made by the American Council of Learned Societies of which the Academy is a constituent. In March the council made thirty-four grants to assist research; of these fourteen were for studies dealing with the middle ages. At the same time, the council awarded sixteen fellowships, of which eight were granted to men engaged in similar studies.

"It was because of this wide interest in mediaeval topics that the Academy was established. Its activity during the first five years of its existence has done much to encourage American scholars to undertake studies in the field of its interest. By sponsoring its various cooperative undertakings, the Academy has made its influence felt not only here but abroad. Indeed, many European scholars have commented on the fact that the Academy's conspicuous success during its comparatively short period of activity seems to indicate how much can be done in a country like the United States where there is not only a large public interest in research of various sorts, but also where funds are available for carrying on research effectively.

"Finally, the Academy's immediate success is particularly interesting in view of the fact that its organization involved a new principle. Previously, learned societies had been organized on the basis of the subject dealth with. The Academy is among the first professional organizations to include scholars who are engaged not in the same restricted field of investigation, but in studies of broad scope covering the whole civilization of a historical period. This principle has enabled the Academy to organize its various coöperative enterprises in such a way that scholars interested in the same problem approach it from different points of view. Through its breadth of interest, the Academy has thus been able not only to promote the study of mediaeval art, literature, and philosophy, but also to extend the application of the American talent for objective analysis to problems of mediaeval economic, commercial and administrative practice which are of particular importance for an adequate understanding of the origins of modern civilization."

If from this scholarly enterprise, a new renaissance as we have anticipated, is to spring, it is well to reflect that it will be a renaissance of the great topics and arts of the spiritual order, and may be hoped to lead society out of the slough of despond and loss of ideals in which the preponderantly materialistic epoch of the immediate past has left the world. Then happily "The Thirteenth, the Greatest of Centuries," the title of a notable book by one of the pioneers in the revival of interest in mediaeval life, Dr. James J. Walsh, may be great indeed to us of the twentieth in its contribution to the dignity and fulness of life.

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MULTIFOLD WAR GUILT

By M. M. HOFFMAN

The writer of this paper was Chaplain of the 359th Infantry on the front lines during the World War and is now a Major and Senior Chaplain of the 3d United States Cavalry Division, Reserves. Thus he speaks from a first-hand experience of war, which may at least be relied upon to have given him an unromantic attitude toward the realities of modern warfare. As even the casual reader will observe, he has since been a student of the causes of war, and his evidence and his ideas are deserving of earnest consideration, even by those who may strongly disagree with him on facts or theory.—The Editors.

UNDER the title "War or Peace?" in THE COMMONWEAL a few weeks ago, the Abbé Dimnet discusses the ever-growing demand in the various countries of the world for a revision of the Versailles Treaty. He professes actually to be grieved because Germany, Austria and Hungary resent the treaty and because so many outsiders in Europe and America sympathize with them in their resentment. He is frank to admit that it is "a fact that an idea is spreading in Great Britain and in America that Germany and Hungary are right." And so the distinguished abbé proposes to THE COMMONWEAL that it should invite its readers to suggest possible solutions of the unsatisfactory situation brought about under the Versailles Treaty. I do not for a moment lay the flattering unction to my soul that what I write here is a solution, but I do believe that it will go farther toward an honest peace than the proposals enunciated by Canon Dimnet.

Against the idea that Germany, Austria and Hungary may be right in their resentment toward what they consider a monstrous treaty, the illustrious French author marshals arguments and statements that are strikingly similar to those used by his able confrère, Abbé Lugan. The latter, some six or seven years ago, in a pamphlet entitled "La charité et la justice parmi les nations," attempted a reply to Dr. John A. Ryan of the Catholic University who was among those who held that there was something radically wrong with the Versailles Treaty. Like Abbé Dimnet, Abbé Lugan brought up the Treaties of 1871 and of Brest-Litovsk in palliation of the rigors of the Versailles Treaty. Even more than Abbé Dimnet he laid the entire responsibility for the war upon the Central Powers. Like Abbé Dimnet, he minimized the burden of the terrific war reparations. And when Dr. Ryan, after quoting Professors Moulton and Constantine McGuire and Keynes in support of his contention concerning the excessiveness of the indemnities, stated that these reparations as well as the invasion of the Ruhr were violations of justice and charity, the indignant abbé wrote: "M. Ryan parait plus allemand que M. von Gerlach. Et il parait plus allemand que ces Allemands de la jeunesse catholique." Abbé Dimnet's admission of the widespread feeling of resentment toward the Versailles Treaty will prevent me from being accused, I hope, of out-Germaning the Germans.

Abbé Dimnet blandly invites the former Central Powers not to consider the past twelve years under the war treaties as too long a penance, for, he assures them, since a readjustment of Europe must inevitably be slow, there are many years of similar penance ahead of them. During these long penitential years, what is it that Germany wants? And he answers: (1) the suspension of the Young Plan; (2) universal disarmament according to the terms of the treaty; (3) a revision of the Polish frontier. Now, the abbé, learned and *au courant* in world affairs as he is, surely must know that there is something of far more vital importance than these three objectives that Germany wants. And that something which Germany wants foremost of all, he cooly waves aside when he claims that anyone who attempts to shake away the "healthy consciousness" of the German government's war guilt is "foolish." No intelligent person denies Germany's war guilt; but millions of intelligent persons throughout the world today deny Germany's sole war guilt. Therein lies the crux of the whole problem—the *Kriegsschuldfrage*. Fraught with more importance to Germany than the Young Plan or disarmament or the Polish question, are the words of the Versailles Treaty placing upon her the stigma of sole and entire responsibility for the World War. And therein resides the growing resentment toward the treaty which Abbé Dimnet marks so clearly in Europe and America today.

Article 231 of the document of Versailles—and Abbé Dimnet knows this as well as anyone—fastened on Germany moral responsibility for the damage done on land, on sea and from the air: in other words, for all the wealth destroyed during four years of unprecedented destruction. Dr. Ryan wrote over seven years ago that that allegation was far from being certain. And as our perspective has grown with the procession of the years, it has become far less certain than ever. That one party to the war was entirely guilty and that the enemy nations were spotlessly clean and innocent is held in only the violently chauvinistic circles today. The scholarly works, "The Origins of the World War" by Professor Sidney B. Fay, "The Genesis of the World War" by Professor Harry Elmer Barnes (his agnosticism has nothing to do with his research studies on the causes of the war), "Roots and Causes of the War" by John S. Ewart, and just recently, "Breaking the Silence" by T. St. John Gaffney, former American consul general in Germany, besides many other erudite studies published in Europe as well as in America, have exploded the ground upon which the theory of

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sole war guilt is built. And to those who admit this and maintain, however, that at any rate most of the guilt must still be placed upon Germany, Professor Fay has painstakingly shown how futile it is to endeavor to allocate the blame with any sort of mathematical precision—how much to Russia, how much to Serbia or Austria, how much to Germany or France or England. It is strange that though historians for over a decade in hundreds of volumes have labored to settle the question of war responsibility, without yet coming to complete agreement, the Allied commission drawing up the treaty was satisfied to reach a final and dogmatic conclusion after a couple of months.

How important this point is can easily be gleaned from the fact that Senator Shipstead of Minnesota has introduced resolutions into Congress looking toward a rectification of this imputation of war guilt. And two months ago Senator Borah on the floor of the upper chamber stated:

> I do not agree at all with the proposition that Germany was solely responsible for the war. I think that France and Great Britain and Russia and other nations which engaged in such a system as prevailed in Europe from the Moroccan affair down to 1914 must share the responsibility for the initiation of the Great War.

Father Charles E. Coughlin, speaking for the Shrine of the Little Flower, represented a cross-section of public opinion when he spoke over the radio from Detroit to the entire Middle West, also only a couple of months ago, and said:

> The scene is the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles, France. The actors are the representatives of the nations of the world. Germany and Austria are the principal villains. Clemenceau and his associates wield the sword of justice. . . . And to climax the tragedy of this so-called "Peace" Treaty of Versailles where God's name was not permitted to be mentioned, where Christ's charity and forgiveness were regarded as impractical, a fine of $33,000,000,000 to be paid within thirty-seven years is imposed upon an enemy with a hope of crushing her financially, despite the fact that her purse is empty and that her heart conceives no honest notion of endeavoring to meet the impossible demands of this tragic Treaty of Versailles.

Father Coughlin's words show the connection of the sole war guilt theory and the Young Plan of reparations. If Germany was not solely responsible, why pin the severe strictures of the Versailles Treaty upon her?

Abbé Dimnet believes that the solution of these problems rests upon the League of Nations which in his opinion represents the only hope for peace. But as long as the League of Nations is built upon the Versailles Treaty, with its Article 231 heaping the exclusive stigma for the war upon Germany and Austria, it is difficult to see how peace can lie in that direction.

The distinguished abbé is correct when he says that Germany hopes for a suspension of the Young Plan reparation payments. Yet, the problem of reparations cannot well be separated from the war guilt theory of Article 231. This article, however, can be separated from the Polish question. In Poland, Germany has a particularly difficult government with which to deal. Abbé Dimnet praises George N. Shuster because he said in one of his COMMONWEAL articles, "War Clouds over Europe," that the post-war French militaristic system was built "because the French people desired peace." Will he also praise Mr. Shuster's words in "Geneva Once Again," where that excellent writer says, concerning the Polish government, that "the Church—one says this advisedly—is more or less abjectly subservient to the state. . . . Free-masonary, concubinage and personal dishonesty characterize the ruling class, which does not even manifest an interest in social amelioration. . . ."?

Of course, the French people desire peace. What European or American people today does not desire peace? Yet each one desires it according to its own conception of what the conditions of peace should be. France wants peace under the Versailles and St. Germain Treaties. Major Bratt, the Swedish military expert, in his recent interesting volume, "That Next War," puts it succinctly:

> In its intelligible desire for security, France, in the treaty of peace, exceeded the limits of right and reason, and created a situation—especially as regards Germany—which was untenable. With admirable patience, strength and balance the German Republic has hitherto borne with it. . . . The present French system of security is not one to preserve a decent peace, but one to secure victory in a new war.

And William Martin, the renowned editor of the *Journal de Genève,* repeats the same thought in the February *Atlantic Monthly*:

> Practically the French, for better or for worse, feel themselves the only guardians of the treaty of peace. . . . But even though the desire for security is pacific in nature and inspired by a profound hatred of war, it is dangerous for Europe. It is dangerous, first of all, because fear of war often in the course of history has led nations to catastrophe. It never would have been possible in 1914 for the Germans to be flung against France and Russia unless they had previously been persuaded that they were going to be attacked. In the second place, the sense of insecurity places a formidable obstacle in the way of confidence, of the reconciliation of peoples, of disarmaments of the destruction of customs barriers, of all the measures that might supply a foundation for durable peace, and without which peace is impossible. More than all else, it distracts attention from the real dangers that beset Europe, and which are not international, but internal, not military and political, but economic and social.

In the face of the unyielding strictures of the Versailles Treaty, Germany has been compelled to turn a friendly countenance to Russia. And because of the Polish question, Abbé Dimnet visualizes a possible war, with France, Poland and their allies pitted against Germany, Russia and their friends. This war would be

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made a great deal more horrible, he ventures to claim, by the presence in it of Russia. Why more horrible than the last? Are not the men of the forces of Russia today the sons and brothers of—and it is probable, to a great extent the same identical individuals as—the men of the forces of Russia which were so long allied with France before 1914 and fought on the side of France during the World War?

Everyone of us hopes that a solution of the present unfortunate situation will be found far short of recourse to another war. The most important factor in this solution will be the revision of the Versailles Treaty, under Article XIX of the Covenant of the League of Nations, and the first step in this revision must be, of course, the deletion of Article 231. Such a step would not only check the growth of Hitlerism and everywhere weaken the spirit of *revanche,* but it would be a gesture toward good-will and justice whose effects would prove profound and world-wide. From all sides we hear appeals for this revision. From the extreme Right, from the Fascists, we hear Mussolini in his Christmas greeting to the German people:

> To insist on the revision of the Versailles Treaty is neither a senseless nor an unfulfillable demand. . . . The demand for the revision of the treaties is made by us for reasons of justice and morality, the only true basis for permanent peace between nations.

And from the extreme Left, we hear Caillaux in an interview in the *République:*

> The most dreadful of all wars has found its conclusion in a treaty which cannot be called a peace treaty but only a continuation of the war with different means. Europe will be destroyed by it unless consciousness and sanity soon prevail.

We who lean neither to the Right nor to the Left, we who are moderates, most indeed take the same attitude. So long as the Treaty of Versailles contains a humiliating and erroneous accusation which up to the present time has proved a real hindrance to the establishment of peace throughout the world, so long will confusion and dissatisfaction prevail. Doesn't that logical thinker, the illustrious author of "The Art of Thinking," really believe, as so many of us do, that the deletion of Article 231 will remove the obstacles which prevent Germany, Austria and Hungary from standing on the same civilized Christian plane with the other nations of Europe and those of America today, and thus commence sincerely the solution of the problem for which he asks suggestions? We cannot help but think so.

HE KNEW DAMIEN

By CECILIA MARY YOUNG

CONSCIOUSLY or unconsciously, the public imbibes its standards, its morals, its education, from drama, and it is difficult to break down this impressive propaganda about a condition or a character which has been portrayed before an audience. Many an auditor of "Rain," that affront to good taste and dictum on the morals of all missionaries, has taken it for granted it is the inevitable lot of men, missionaries or traders, virtuous or weak, to go the way of all flesh after any extended residence in "the tropics." The law has been spoken.

Now that the gentle Brother Joseph Dutton of Molokai has died, not of leprosy but of old age—Dutton, the companion and the one who knew Damien best—the old Hyde story appears to be reviving. And the wiseacres observe, "Damien was not clean; he need not have died of leprosy. Dutton who was there for forty-five years, was exempt and died at eighty-seven with the official pronouncement, 'Death due to old age.'"

An unusual document, of which the writer has been custodian for ten years, and which she was requested to keep sealed until after the death of Dutton, was opened upon the announcement in the newspapers, March 26, "The friend of the lepers is dead." The document is a typewritten copy of the testimony to the Bishop of Honolulu from Dutton's lips, February 12, 1890, regarding the intimate life of Damien then dead about ten months. This letter from the only surviving witness of Damien's character as a priest and as a man is a long document, coldly judicial and formal; yet what a chronicle of heroism, of stoical courage and sublimity of persevering purpose of two exemplars is revealed between the lines! It is an absolutely selfless history, devoid of rhetoric or fine writing.

It is headed, "Statement as to Father Damien. Catholic Mission, Leper Settlement, Kalawao, Molokai, Sandwich Island," and dated as stated above.

> To his lordship, Bishop Hermann, Honolulu, H. I. Right Reverend and Dear Sir: The Reverend Fathers Mathias and Wendelin have recently informed me that they were directed by you to make an examination here regarding the life of the late Reverend Father Damien Deveuster, his virtues and characteristics, his relations with the work at this Leper Settlement and with the officials of the Hawaiian government, etc.; making a report of the examination, embodying therein my statement in these matters.
>
> After we had all made the same a subject of prayer for three days, Fathers Mathias and Wendelin met with me and they took some notes of what I had to say in regard to the things in view.
>
> But afterward, they concluded to hold their report to enable me to make my statement in writing, giving it somewhat more scope than at first intended. Since the

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return to Honolulu of the Reverend Father Mathias, Reverend Father Wendelin has suggested that I should address the statement to you, making it complete, not only speaking of things undoubtedly favorable in Reverend Father Damien's character and relations here, but also embracing points in which any disparaging statements have been made as far as I know, and particularly, to point out the part taken by the Hawaiian government in the management of the affairs of the Leper Settlement. All this I will strive faithfully to do, but giving the statement rather in outline form than making attempt to relate many particulars.

As directed by the Fathers, I first state regarding myself. I came here from the United States to work with Reverend Father Damien, arriving at Kalawao the evening of July 29, 1886; from that evening until his death on April 15, 1889, I was intimately associated with him in his work among the people, particularly with his orphan boys, and in having the care of his two churches (of only one church though, in the latter part), in serving his Masses and in assisting about his various ministrations, so far as a layman could, though in this last I was somewhat restricted after the summer of 1887, being from that time principally occupied in dressing sores and in the care of the sick orphans. But my place for work was close by his house, and, for about half the time, I ate with him at his table. Several priests had been with him at different times before I came, but there was no one with him at that time, nor was there any other white person belonging to the Mission, until May, 1888, when Father Conrardy came.

Regarding the Reverend Father Damien, I will speak first of his zeal and earnestness, for these were the traits that first impressed me and which seemed with him, always prominent.

He had great natural strength and vitality. These powers, coupled with his zeal, seemed to enable him to be ever ready to pursue with vigor whatever seemed to him ought to be done. In everything that concerned the welfare of the place here, and of the people, he was always alive and pushing, in fact, often taking an active interest in affairs of which others, government officials, etc., had charge. There were but few things done here of which he did not have knowledge. His advice was frequently asked in matters outside of his duties—asked by government officials and others. He was not restricted as the priests are now, to ordinary parish duties, but actually took a hand in various affairs going on for the improvement of the place, doing with his own hands more or less of nearly every sort of work in both parishes, more especially doing carpentry work, but was able to turn his hand to almost anything. . . .

When there was, or when there was not, a government physician here, he kept a supply of drugs and prescribed for many of the sick. Quite a number of the natives would call for him in preference to the regular physician. This treatment of the sick he continued, in quite a general way until the summer of 1887, when he turned the drugs over to me and I kept them for use at the Mission Home under the direction of a physician. In replenishing them I got them from the government. As to Father Damien's relations with these physicians, it somewhat depended upon who the physician was. Some were satisfied with his practising as he did, others, one in particular, opposed it. He discontinued because of this opposition. Up to the summer of 1887, Father Damien also dressed leper's sores from time to time, and gained considerable knowledge in this and also in the use of medicines in a general way. All of these special occupations, however, were very much broken into by other duties and, therefore, not followed with any particular regularity. His method was to drive ahead at what he deemed the most important until something else seemed more so, when he would jump over into that; so that he left a track of unfinished jobs, though a certain share would be completed. It seemed, sometimes, that he tried to do more than one person could expect to finish.

How different were the dispositions of these two men, living close together in this small island, is revealed very clearly in the foregoing paragraph. For while Damien was impulsive, generous of himself to a fault, impetuous, Dutton was cool, methodical, a man of machine-like efficiency.

As a boy Ira Dutton had worked in a printing office and a book store, and at eighteen had left school (his office work had been done in off hours) and joined the Company B Infantry of the 13th Wisconsin Regiment in Janesville, Wisconsin, where he lived with his mother and father. His father always hoped that the boy would follow in his footsteps as a minister of the Gospel. But the Civil War put an end to that and young Ira served the entire four years. In the latter years he entered the Quartermaster's Department and this experience prepared the future laborer for Molokai—Molokai the Hopeless, as it was before the United States stepped in, before there was regular medical supervision, before the missionary Sisters were allowed to go in to minister to the sick.

After the war, Dutton was dicharged with the rank of captain and for six years worked with a Southern railroad as chief yard clerk, having devoted two years immediately following the close of the war to construction work for the national cemeteries of Shiloh and Corinth. Finally, he gave eight years of service in the War Department as investigation agent and claim adjuster, and then tried out a vocation as a Trappist monk. It was not his vocation.

Dutton, the man of affairs, could well appraise the simple Damien in his worldly relations, but he continues as follows:

> He was very hospitable. He made a practice of meeting ing the weekly steamers at Kalaupapa, for the purpose of greeting any newly arrived lepers, or any visitors there might be. For a long time the steamer arrived very early in the morning and, in order to reach the landing in time, he used to say his Mass, on those mornings, at about four o'clock. So he was the foremost, or among the foremost, in meeting any passengers that were being landed. If there were any lepers who could not at the moment be provided with quarters, he was sure to bring them to the Mission here, if any would come, and have them cared for until they were regularly located. . . . Young boys, so arriving, were generally placed at the Mission, in the Institution, or refuge for the care of boys, that Father

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Damien was trying to build up. About the beginning of 1888, this "Institution" having been somewhat systemized, the placing there of all young boys, who were not with their parents or some near relatives was regularly authorized by the government. Leper boys, and men also who desired or could be induced, were placed in the same way under Father Damien's care.

Having thus referred to the "Institution" for boys and men on the Mission grounds here (grounds used by the Mission, but the property of the government) it may be well to state in connection what the Hawaiian government has to do with it, and at the same time, to explain the general relation of the government with the Leper Settlement as a whole. . . . The history of the Leper Settlement shows that it has always been operated by the Hawaiian government, through its Board of Health, the regular and general expenses being all paid for by the government. . . . At first a good many families and groups of people built their own cabins; but more recently the government has had constructed a considerable number of comfortable cottages. . . . In the first part of the construction of the Boys' Home, Father Damien did a great deal of the work with his own hands.

A long, rather involved explanation follows, about funds and the distribution of rations and "aid" by Father Damien who was for some time, so he informed Brother Dutton, Assistant Superintendent of the Settlement, with a monthly salary. Dutton designates what he calls "extras" as being supplied by Father Damien to the inmates of the "Institution" at the Mission, and also to other lepers outside, and later on it develops in his report that this refers to:

such help as went toward their provision or support, but it was not any part of the regular support. It consisted in giving help generally in special needs, such as when a family had in it some *kokuas* not drawing rations, the family thus being short of supplies, or a family thus short through waste or neglect, and when some few of the whites, or others, needed some special kind of food, etc. The expenses for what he thus gave were paid by the Catholic Mission. So it was quite the practice among the people to come to Father Damien for any special aid required, yet some would not come to him at all, some Protestants, and at times, some Catholics, those persons with whom he had difficulties. Though these people easily forgot what they may have deemed at the time harsh treatment, and, in most cases, would return to Father Damien in their next distress to again ask his aid, yet there were some who did not do so. There were some [the next words should be italicized on the memory] *who came often for aid, but who when not in Father Damien's presence, would abuse him most shamefully.*

And then the testimony goes straight on candidly:

No matter what may have occurred in the past, if Father Damien could give the help asked for, he was pretty sure to give it. [He was, at times very vehement and excitable in regard to matters that did not seem right to him, or, if opposed by anyone, when he was satisfied his judgment was correct, sometimes doing and saying things which he would afterward regret. But] He had the faculty, in a remarkable degree, of putting resentment aside. Very soon after a heated altercation, he would be toward the opponent as if no such thing happened, seeming to have forgotten the matter. Only, if there was anything to be done that he felt assured should be done in a certain way, he was not likely to rest until it was carried out in that way. Probably I am safe in saying that in all of these differences he had a true desire to do right, to bring about what he thought would be for the best. No doubt he erred sometimes in judgment as all of us do.

Dutton points out that because the government authorities did not always agree with Father Damien there was confusion, "because at all times he was urgent for improvements or for what he though would be such," and that it was by the *"action"* of Father Damien that many things were done by the Hawaiian government.

However, Dutton vaguely hinted at enemies in those to *whom he had given favors,* as was brought out a few paragraphs above. What bitter irony man's ingratitude makes in experience when a very genial, time-seasoned, splendid man made the remark in the writer's hearing, "If you ever want anyone to hate you, do an enormous favor for him!"

The slanders which had commenced to take shape from venemous tongues, and which culminated in the "Letter" of the Protestant minister, Dr. Hyde, published in the San Francisco newspaper four months after the priest's death, had already reached the ears of the dying man and his lay assistant, Brother Joseph Dutton.

There is considerable mention of the circumstance in the document. Dutton describes Father Damien calling him during his last illness to declare, with Dutton as his witness, that every accusation was false.

Dutton says in his testimony to his bishop:

It never occurred to me to question his life-long adherence to virtue. He seemed, while I knew him, to have no thought for such things.

A New York physician had written Dutton for the medical history of interesting cases of leprosy and Damien had volunteered to cite his own, Dutton writing it out in Damien's own words. . . .

It was the last statement of this character that he made. He said it was correct and signed it as "correct" at my request. This was March 10, 1889, or about that date.

An addendum to the document runs:

June 13, 1890. A copy of these notes has been received from Dr. Morrow, and I have sent it to Bishop Hermann. I have also called his attention to the declaration referred to and the fact that Father Damien volunteered the same. Bishop Hermann approved of having copies of this statement and supplement furnished to certain parties.

The list of names follows, completing the official document.

It was in August of that year that Hyde's scurrilous letter criticizing the conduct of a dead man was published in California and read by Robert Louis Steven-

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son in Sydney, Australia. The gallant novelist wrote a letter, which he in turn directed to Dr. Hyde in the columns of the same paper, totally unconscious that—in defending the unassailable character of a priest of a religion which he, in the narrow tenets of his traditional upbringing, considered antagonistic—he had written a classic.

Returning to the various criticisms of the hero-priest, Dutton in the testimony takes up all the charges.

> Coupled with the above charge as published was one to the effect that he was unclean in his personal habits. . . . He did not pretend to neatness in his personal habits. He told me he considered this a defect. He was very simple in his bodily wants and was quite able to subsist upon the coarsest food.

And today we hear the assertion that Damien did not take the ordinary precautions against the disease. What precautions could a man use who had to split wood and saw it with his own hands, to dig, to carry, to take care of poultry and stable, to tie up rotting stumps of humanity, to cover putrid sores with what available rags he could find in the abandoned island? What time, what opportunity for sterilization against infection—an earnest but impetuous man who had a world of responsibility on his shoulders? I passed over these lines in the middle of the long testament:

> His love for these people of the Leper Settlement, all of them, was great. He gave himself freely. A sudden call for charity, one in distress, would cause him to drop at once what he might be engaged upon, except when at the altar, and quickly give his aid. . . . In his ministrations with the natives he was untiring; especially in attendance upon the dying was he earnest and helpful. So frequently being with him in this office, I was particularly impressed with it and often thought that he must have been a great comfort to many souls in these moments. He thought I had a faculty for knowing the death signs and charged me always to give him warning.

In Damien's priestly office of anointing ulcerous eyes, ears, nose, mouth, feet and hands, touching these and praying and making the Sign of the Cross over the part anointed, he was constantly in danger of infection from the very nature of the loathsome disease.

Gentle old Dutton's soul has slipped quietly away from the island and the people he had also come to love, "without any trouble to anyone," as he had once expressed his wish of going. His life and sacrifice in going to Molokai was not in penance for his own life, but in expiation for one whom he had loved. Damien, Joseph de Veuster, also went to take the place of a brother who had offered his services but had become ill on the eve of his planned departure. The younger brother substituted himself for the sacrifice.

Complacently the world looks up to and reads false heroics in drama and fiction. Discerning and chivalrous minds of the caliber of Stevenson recognize the ring of reality in honest men, not hypocrites, nor yet not idols; for, as Mr. George N. Shuster points out:

> [Stevenson] saw in Damien not merely the sanctuary of human devotion but also dimly, the sanctuary of God. He bent the knee—if he did not altogether kneel—to the loftiness of grace.

Dutton, in life, bowed down at the grave of Damien, and in this document he has spoken from his own newly turned grave and has declared emphatically and for all time that in this person of Damien, beneath a rugged, unprepossessing exterior, was enduring, heroic virtue. For he stated simply to his bishop, elsewhere in the letter of February, 1890:

> He would wish the whole truth to be told and if he had the selection of the one to speak of his last few years, he would, I think, certainly select me. I do not speak this in boast but rather to show the depth of our love for each other.

Plouradou, The Babies' Saint

Down near the Pyrenees
In times gone by
Babies and children
Were not known to cry.
South in Bearn then dwelt—
Type of modernity—
A saintly specialist
For all eternity.

A humble saint, obscure,
His shrines are few,
His life is hard to learn,
Saint Plouradou.
He is the friendly saint
Mothers invoke.
He keeps from crying
All little folk.

Babies should quickly learn
His litany:

"From sticking safety-pins
May we be free.
Pray our deliverance
From hunger's ache.
Colic and snuffles
Far from us take.
From older relatives
Who would chastise;
Stubborn ear-washing,
And soap in our eyes;
And from the living dark,
The *loup garou,*
Keep us and pray for us,
Saint Plouradou.
Soothe thou the tender gums
Which cause our fuss,
So teeth cut easily,
O pray for us."

Sh—naughty baby, who
Bade you to weep?
Help! Help! Saint Plouradou,
Bless him with sleep.

ANNA BIRD STEWART.

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DOCTORS DIFFER ON BIRTH CONTROL

By EDWARD ROBERTS MOORE

APPROACH by a non-professional journal to a discussion of contraception in its medical aspects must be made with great reserve. The medical profession, often recklessly quoted in support of one or the other opinion on this much controverted subject, may well protest at unwarranted trading upon its prestige, and condemn dogmatic medical declarations on the part of laymen and laywomen.

With regard to public policy on conscious control of population, definite and emphatic opposition has been stated, and we hope, justified. The present downward trend of population is a matter of common knowledge. That this trend spells economic calamity becomes evident upon but little consideration. These aspects of the question, however, proponents of contraception, ecclesiastical or otherwise, would appear to have overlooked entirely. Medical opinion on the subject, however, has been rather accurately summarized by a committee of the Federal Council of Churches in its recent pronouncement. "It is known," says the Council, that the medical profession "is divided." This is the net result of a continuous study of the problems of marriage and the home extending over a period of years.

But by what curious twist of logic the Committee on Marriage and the Home leaps from the frank admission that it cannot claim the weight of medical authority in favor of contraception to the conclusion that contraception is to be given "guarded approval," is difficult to comprehend. Moreover it "feels obliged to point out, that present knowledge of birth control is incomplete, and that an element of uncertainty, although it is small, still remains." Then it naively adds that "married couples should . . . welcome children, should they come."

In other words, because perhaps of "problems of overpopulation" (we have see that the great problem is likely to be *under*-population!), or of "economic considerations" (concerning which more than passing comment has been made in this series of articles), a *medical* technique that is admittedly neither safe nor sure is recommended by a *lay* group! Well does the *Herald Tribune* say editorially in its edition of Saturday, March 21: "It is a remarkable statement upon birth control which is issued today by the Federal Council of Churches." We register hearty accord with the conclusion of the *Herald Tribune's* editorial writer—though perhaps not with his premises.

It is true that no authoritative, final or definitive statement in regard to contraception has been issued by the medical profession. No formal condemnation of contraception has been pronounced, nor any blanket approval given. In fact the lay inquirer is likely to be not a little confused by the variety of opinions he will find expressed. When in 1929 the Remer Bill, framed to remove certain legal restrictions on the dissemination of contraceptive advice and information, was filed in the New York State Legislature at Albany, thousands of protests against its adoption were sent to Albany by medical men throughout the state. Many others were reported as favoring it. Recently Senator Gillett of Massachusetts introduced a bill at Washington to authorize the dissemination of literature and apparatus freely under medical recommendation and on medical responsibility. To paraphrase a classic sentence, "it is strange yet it is not strange" that there were noted men of medicine on both sides.

On this point, however, one very pertinent observation should be made. Let us allow Dr. J. Whitridge Williams of Johns Hopkins University, who appeared in favor of the Gillett Bill, to make it for us. The record of the hearing on February 13, before a Senate subcommittee at Washington, quotes Dr. Williams as saying that the average doctor objects to the present law for the same reason that he objects to the prohibition and narcotic laws, because it attempts to tell the physician how to prescribe for his patients. This statement is of far-reaching significance. It means, and it would seem that this is admitted even by the contraceptionist group, that advocacy of legislation such as contained in the Gillett and Remer Bills in no way implies approval of contraception itself. It may arise, and Dr. Williams says this is the case of the average doctor, solely from the conviction that the intimate physician-patient relationship should not be intruded upon by any lay tribunal. This is a circumstance in the light of which should be examined much contraceptionist propaganda. Worthy of mention also is an editorial in the April issue of the *Medical Times,* a physicians' magazine with a circulation of 14,000. In it, Dr. Arthur C. Jacobson, a Brooklyn physician, and editor of the publication, says, "The medical man of today is forced into the position of accepting birth control as it is practised, sometimes regardless of his own attitude."

It must not be overlooked, moreover, that even such limited professional approval of this type of legislation as has appeared has come for the most part solely from individuals. The really responsible medical societies —regional, national or of special branches of medicine in this and other countries—have not endorsed movements to enact such legislation, and their refusal to do so has generally been in decisive terms. The attempt to popularize Senator Gillett's proposal as "The Doctors' Bill" is a case in point, and met with promp repudiation from the American Medical Association. In a letter addressed to Chairman Norris of the Judiciary Committee and read into the record, Dr. W. C. Woodward, director of the Bureau of Legal Medicine of the A. M. A., says:

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"I am informed that the Senate Committee on the Judiciary will give a hearing, February 13, on S. 4582, a bill to amend section 305(a) of the Tariff Act of 1922, as amended, and sections 211, 245, and 312 of the Criminal Code, as amended. The purposes of this bill seem to be (1) to promote the dissemination of information concerning methods for the prevention of conception and (2) to facilitate the distribution of facilities for accomplishing that end.

"Propaganda in support of this bill refers to it as 'Our Doctors' Bill.' To prevent any misunderstanding, you are informed that the American Medical Association has taken no part in the preparation of this bill or in procuring its introduction. The association has expressed no opinion with respect to the principles and purposes of the bill."

No attitude on the question, therefore, can accurately be described as "the attitude of the medical profession." Certain points of agreement and certain others of divergence may, however, be indicated. In the first place, there would seem to be general agreement that all methods of preventing conception so far devised are uncertain in their effect. The Federal Council of Churches recognizes this "element of uncertainty." Estimates of reliability vary all the way from 50 to 90 percent.[1] Granting the highest percentages claimed, however, the element of uncertainty has an importance not always recognized. Ninety percent efficiency means one failure in ten. Suppose we go still further and posit an average failure of but one in twenty. Sincere advocacy of contraception is very frequently based on the physical condition of the woman. S. Adolphus Knopf, M.D., in a letter to the New York *Times,* dated March 30, 1931, mentions several conditions, as diseases of the heart and kidneys, pulmonary tuberculosis, etc., where "an added pregnancy would be disastrous to the physical and mental well-being of the mother." The advocate of birth control says to such a woman, "Here is a means whereby despite your condition, you may 'safely' continue the exercise of your marital privileges," with the mental reservation, however, that "safely" must not be interpreted as excluding one in twenty chances of failure. And failure, it is said, may, in this case, mean death. But, say the Federal Council of Churches consolingly, "Married couples should keep these facts in mind and welcome children should they come"!

Contraceptive methods are, therefore, admittedly uncertain in their efficacy. A numerous, weighty and substantial cross-section of the medical profession considers them also unsafe and frequently harmful.

Eleven members of the British National Birth Rate Commission, among them several physicians of eminence, have affixed their signatures to the following unreserved condemnation of contraception: "Medical evidence has been given that all unnatural modifications of marital association, and all artificial contraceptive methods by mechanical or chemical contrivances, if habitually employed by normally constituted individuals, are harmful."[2]

A well-known Netherlandish gynecologist, Dr. M. A. Van Bouwdijk-Bastiaanse, at a meeting in Nymwegen in 1929, declared contraceptive methods advocated by the New Malthusianism a failure from the viewpoint of medical hygiene. After stating that there is not a single preventive at all times and surely uninjurious, he proceeds to mention as among the possible serious consequences from the use of contraceptives, inflammation or cancer of the neck of the womb, later involving adjacent organs, sterility, and death in rare cases. He then adds that danger to the health of the woman, even to her life, whether direct or indirect is bound up with the New Malthusianism, and exceeds by far the danger connected with pregnancy and childbirth. He concludes by saying, "That many, perhaps most scientists in this field, agree with me regarding the effect of the use of contraceptives on the health condition, especially of women, can be readily shown by many quotations, for instance from Dr. Max Marcuse, editor of the *Handwörterbuch der Sexualwissenschaft,* who, in a conference of the 'Internationale Gesellschaft für Sexualforschung' says: 'It has been fully established that—apart from the wounds and dangerous infections to a woman's sexual organs by reason of the use of certain instruments or means to which recourse may be had—contraceptives may injure the health of those regularly using them.' "[3]

Another witness of weight is Professor Sellheim of Leipzig University. In an address which he delivered as Chairman of the German Congress of Specialists on Woman's Diseases held at Leipzig in May, 1929, Professor Sellheim said: "Nearly every method to prevent pregnancy has, at least as far as the woman is concerned, a not inconsiderable injurious effect upon her health. Nature can't be fooled. Continuous but vain irritation of the woman's sexual organs makes the woman more or less subject to illness in the abdominal tracts, and not infrequently sterile."[4]

To abstinence from parenthood but not from sexual relations, Professor Kouwer of Utrecht[5] assigned the striking phrase "la grève gravidique," the same expression employed by Ernest Kahn, a German statistician, in the title of his recent volume, "Der Internationale Geburtenstreik." This "strike against parenthood," in the opinion of these European authorities, involves fundamental risks to the health of those who wish to separate sexual sensation from the biologically natural consequences of sex relations.

[1] See Sir Thomas Horder, *British Medical Journal,* 1928, II, p. 484.

[2] "Second Report of the National Birth Rate Commission, 1918-1920," pp. CLXII-CLXVII. London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1920. The signers mentioned are H. R. Birmingham, Armand Routh, the late Dame Mary Scharlieb, A. K. Chalmers, Mary H. Clay, R. F. Norton, W. F. Brown, Hermann Gollancz, Alfred E. Garvie, Alfred T. Schofield, J. W. Ballantyne.

[3] See "Verslag ... Congres Tegen Het Neo-Malthusianisme," p. 17. Venlo, 1929.

[4] "Archiv. für Geb. und Gyn.," vol. 137, p. 658.

[5] "Archives mensuels d'obstétrique et gynécologie," 1917, vol. IX.

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Two recent testimonies from European authorities are very much to the point. In the March, 1931, issue of *National Life*,[1] F. J. McCann, M.D., F.R.C.S., consulting surgeon to the Samaritan Free Hospital for Women, and president of the League of National Life, says, "The injurious effects of different contraceptive methods are at last appearing in medical literature. . . . *All known methods of contraception are harmful to the female; they only differ in being more or less so.*" (Italics the author's.)

On the opening page of a solid volume on abortion published only a few months ago by a Viennese specialist, Dr. Sigismund Peller, we find the following sweeping and unqualified statement: "Scientific medical men are against the limitation of reproduction."[2]

During the past eighteen months, a considerable number of the outstanding gynecologists and obstetricians of many cities of the union, notably east of the Mississippi, have been asked their opinion on the effects of contraceptive practices. There was, of course, no unanimity. An analysis of replies received, however, justifies two significant statements: (1) There would appear to be extreme reluctance on the part of responsible members of the profession to indorse contraception; at the most, a guarded statement to the effect that "no ill effects have been observed" is ventured. (2) Vigorous and unqualified condemnation of the practice of contraception was frequently uttered.

Among the latter were many that coincided with the apparently prevailing opinion among European authorities, some of whom have been quoted, that sterility regularly follows as a consequence of the habitual practice of contraception. A distinguished specialist in Pittsburgh says that in his opinion, "about 45 percent of sterility is due to contraceptives." A well-known New Jersey doctor confirms this opinion in these words: "In looking over the last thousand office cases, I notice that prevention of conception during the first year or two predisposes the women to excessive stoutness and then when a child is desired, sterility has taken place. . . ."

An experienced physician of Providence declares that contraceptive measures "induce sterility by pathological changes in the genital and pelvic organs." Of particular importance are the views of members of some of the most authoritative medical faculties, to the effect that the use of contraceptives in the first few years of married life gives rise to conditions that render young women infertile when, later on, they desire children.

Much testimony to other undesirable consequences of contraceptive practice is to be had. Some of the great names in the field of medical instruction, such as Drs. William Graves and Donald Macomber of Harvard, are known to condemn unequivocally, on medical grounds, the prevention of pregnancy as advocated by professional contraceptionists. The Pittsburgh surgeon whose opinion was given above may again be quoted: "I should say that very definite conditions have been observed following the use of all types of contraceptives, as well as contraceptive measures. . . . There are undoubtedly cases where neurological or psychiatrical results of an undesirable character are unmistakably attributed to the use of such devices or practices." Another physician, of Detroit, stated that, "in the majority of cases seen . . . a certain amount of physical and physiological damage was done by the use of contraceptives." One of the most distinguished of consulting statisticians in the insurance world has declared that "without hesitation the question as to whether the practice of contraception be attended by effects physically harmful may be answered in the affirmative." And: "There is not the slightest doubt but that neurological or psychiatrical results of an undesirable nature follow contraceptive practices in many cases."

That cancer may follow as a result of contraceptive practice is a not uncommon opinion. Perhaps this much may be said without fear of contradiction: Cancer may, and undoubtedly does at times, result from the use of some types of contraceptive apparatus; from other types, it may occur, if not directly from their use, at least from mishaps and lack of skill in their application. Moreover, few if any women are capable of so adjusting the various appliances devised for use by the female as to escape the possibility or even the probability of such mishap. There are outstanding authorities, however, particularly in Europe, where greater progress in genuine research along these lines has been made than in the United States, who do not feel it necesary to distinguish between use and misuse in ascribing cancer as a direct result of the practice of contraception. In this connection, reference may be made to the authoritative encyclopedia of Halban-Seitz, "Biologie und Pathologie des Weibes," vol. IV, pp. 668 ff., concerning the extent to which inflammation due to the employment of preventives may aggravate conditions leading to cancer of the uterus.

Dr. M. A. Van Bouwdijk-Bastiaanse, quoted above, gives added testimony on this point: "In my preliminary note anent the population problem, . . . I pointed to the possibility that the large increase in cervical cancer may be due to the wide use of contraceptives. On theoretical grounds, such connection is certainly not impossible. Although but little is known regarding the direct cause of cancer, it is admitted that cancer may be caused by long-continued irritation, produced by a foreign body within the cervix, or through continual vaginal flushing using chemical elements. . . . I have above stated that inflammation of the neck of the womb results not infrequently from the use of preventives. *That such inflammation may in turn lead to cancer is mentioned in nearly all scientific publications dealing with this subject.*"[3]

[1] The organ of The League of National Life, London, England.
[2] Dr. Sigismund Peller, "Fehlgeburt und Bevölkerungsfrage," p. 1. Stuttgart, 1930.
[3] See "Verslag ... Congres Tegen Het Neo-Malthusianisme," p. 171 Venlo, 1929.

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So runs the testimony. Obviously there is much that in a professional journal would be entirely suitable which in a publication of general circulation would offend against good taste. Precise technical descriptions of the ill effects that in their experience and judgment follow from the practice of contraception by various methods are given by Beard in his work on sexual neurasthenia, by Mantegazza, Hirt, Von Hösslin, Eulenburg, Valenta, Elischer, Gräfe, Pigeolot, Ferdy, Taylor (former president of the British Gynecological Society), Sharlieb, Foerster and many others. So great a weight of opinion cannot lightly be set aside.

Popularization of contraception necessarily involves promulgation of the notion that birth control by continence or abstinence from marital relationship is neurologically or psychiatrically harmful. As a matter of fact, nature herself would appear to have posited abstinence for long periods as a necessity, for during the latter months of pregnancy and the subsequent early months of lactation the exercise of the conjugal privilege is admittedly perilous. In this connection Dr. Ross McC. Chapman, speaking of "the too frequently met with mistaken contention that sexual relations must be maintained in the interest of good health," says, "Normal repressions and self-control are indications of and are a part of good health."[1] And Dr. Frederick J. McCann, the authoritative British gynecologist quoted earlier in this article, in his pamphlet entitled "Contraception, a Common Cause of Disease," states that "for the highly sexual individual to control the sexual urge may be on occasions extremely difficult; still this is not harmful but rather beneficial, for self-control is thereby strengthened. *No one has ever been seriously affected by chastity: it is unchastity which produces injurious effects.*" (Italics the author's.)

One further comment would seem to be appropriate at this point. Let it be recalled that it is the plight of the woman whose physical condition is such that she is advised of possible serious consequences from pregnancy or labor, that is most frequently cited by advocates of birth control. Attention has already been called to the utter unfairness under these circumstances of advocating methods of avoiding pregnancy the effectiveness of which cannot be guaranteed. Let it now be asked whether a woman not in condition to bear a child can repeatedly "suffer with impunity those exactions of the flesh which rouse every fiber from the heart to the fingertips"!

What conclusion can the lay reader to whom the whole matter may be of vital personal importance, reach from the above discussion? Former articles of this series have dealt with the downward trend of population and its calamitous results. But notions of cosmic tragedy do not often effectively influence the individual. The final article of this series will envisage appropriate moral concepts. These will most frequently determine the individual's course of action in regard to brth control. But I am for the moment prescinding from the moral consideration also—here and now I am concerned solely with the medical aspect of the question. And the answer is a "Stop—Look—Listen" warning. It is not sufficient to *think* that no train is bearing down upon an unguarded crossing—one must be *sure*. So with contraception. It is true that no final medical judgment has been passed, but scores of competent witnesses make a strong case against it.

World-renowned authorities have posited sterility as an almost certain consequence of contraception. Measured and weighty judgment has been expressed of the probability of close connection between contraception and cancer. A shocking number and variety of pelvic and other infections would seem to be intimately associated with the several preventive measures in common use. Eminent neurologists and psychiatrists talk in terms of neuroses and psychoses as the result of the refusal of parenthood.

Contraception is a medical technique condemned by many distinguished members of the medical profession. Thinking people will not overlook this fact when they have occasion to evaluate propaganda in its favor emanating from lay groups.

[1] Ross McC. Chapman, "Birth Control and Mental Hygiene," in "Birth Control Facts and Responsibilities: A Symposium Dealing with This Important Subject from a Number of Angles," edited by Adolf Meyer, p. 111. Baltimore: The Williams and Wilkins Company, 1925.

Question

Chief Pushmataha
Sleeping at Arlington
You and our Choctaws
Foes of Tecumseh
Fought for America
On the south border
Fought our red brothers
For the white strangers
Who have forgotten.

In Mississippi
Land of lost greatness
Homeless we wander:
Only our women
Weaving and selling
Baskets of swamp-cane
Keep the hearts beating
In Pushmataha's
Sons and their children.

Nothing but swamp-cane
Stays of old richness
Rain on the marshes
Buys food with baskets
When the drouth lingers
Killing our bog-bloom
We die of hunger.
Chief Pushmatah
Did you do well?

LILIAN WHITE SPENCER.

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Places and Persons

THE ARCHBISHOP

By H. REID

DEATH has come, at last, to the archbishop. Those that cared for him most are glad, and he, I am sure, gladdest of all; for it has been a long dying.

He was a splendid man in his good days, his old friends tell us, splendid in his person, tall, handsome, regal; splendid in his masculine vigor and energy; splendid in his human kindliness and his big, hearty laugh; splendid in his missionary work among the Red Indians in the West. But the strong brain failed when old age began, and for years he has been a baby—a rather naughty baby, needing a good deal of scolding, getting up and going out in the cold when he was supposed to be safe in bed, making a dismal outcry about being washed and dressed, unquestionably a troublesome baby, and a great tax on the patience of the gentle nuns who cared for his declining years.

But now he is an archbishop again. Death has consecrated and enthroned him anew. Dignity and calm are in his face; his hands are quietly folded. He lies in his episcopal robes, a Prince of the Church and a humble servant of God.

His canon-confessor, whom he loved (and scolded) as a son, has been in and out all day arranging for "carrying him away," as they say here. In this little, ancient, Italian town it is the custom to carry people away in the evening, and at seven o'clock on a winter night it is already dark. Also it is very cold; there is snow on the nearer hills. In the lighted doorway a group of blue-veiled nuns look on as the cortège is formed. First a long train of sandaled Franciscans (how do bare feet feel in this weather?) in their brown habits and cord girdles, each carrying a lighted candle. Then a still longer train of seminarists in white cottas, each with his book and candle. Then a stately group of canons, magnificent in purple and ermine—an enviable magnificence on a winter night!

Then the bier with its gold-embroidered pall, borne on the shoulders of Brothers of the Misericordia. Behind them the heavy tramp of the rest of the Brothers, shrouded from head to foot in black. They carry great flaring torches, and in their light one sees the gleam of dark Italian eyes within the eyeholes of their head-coverings. At the end, come the group of blue-veiled nuns.

While they waited in the doorway the nuns talked a little about him, smiling tenderly at some quaint reminiscence. One recalled how when the canon-confessor was confined to his room with a cold, the old priest escaped from his nurses and was found far along the avenue, half-dressed and in slippers, saying breathlessly, "He is ill. I must visit him. I must go to him. He must have a nurse. He must be cared for. I must see to it." Furiously resentful he was at being forced to return and as soon as the Sisters' backs were turned he was out again, saying, "He is ill. I must go to him." Another told that when the younger man came the next day (for the cold had been no great matter), the archbishop turned his back upon him to punish him for staying away, and then embraced him for joy at seeing him again.

All knew that his confessions were frequent and prolonged, for they were made in the stentorian voice that he was accustomed to use in preaching in his own cathedral, so that any who passed that way stopped their ears and fled lest they should hear what was not meant for them. Another told of a lady, resident in the convent, who one day, looking down on him in his chaise-longue, said, "Do you know, Monsignore, that you have a most beautiful head of hair?" "Put down your head," said the old man, "and let me see yours." He looked, and then remarked, "I think you make not a bad second."

But now a gentle glance from the Reverend Mother indicates that this is not the moment for recollections too frivolous and no more is said. Silently the nuns follow at the end of the procession.

All the length of the dim *viale* it extends, between the olive groves where the torches shed a weird, white light on the grey foliage. By day the rose hedge still shows pink and crimson rags of summer, but now it is seen only as a line of darkness bounding the path.

> Auditui meo dabis gaudium et laetitiam:
> et exultabant ossa humiliata.

So long is the cortège that the voices of the singers sound far away and their tapers twinkle among the leaves like fireflies in June. Overhead the stars are bright, and down in the valley the lights of the city are themselves a starry firmament.

The great door is open and the voices are lost as the singers turn to climb the hill to the cathedral. The nuns do not pass out beyond the enclosure. They turn back at the gate.

Meanwhile in the dimly lit cathedral the bishop, with his attendant canons, waits. The sound of singing comes nearer, and soon the procession enters. The Brothers of the Misericordia beat out their torches on the flags of the piazza and one, more careful, goes about extinguishing with his feet the flaming scraps. Soon all are in, the bier is laid in its place and the Office begins.

The scene is unforgettable. These Tuscan folk, great and small, have this gift, that even in their most

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unstudied attitudes they group themselves as for a picture. The great artists invented nothing; they painted what they saw. Imagine it thus:

In the middle of the nave the bier, surrounded by ten tall candles; toward the altar a brown-habited monk holding the banner; at the other end the bishop, robed and mitered; up each side the long white row of seminarists; the canons, standing about in irregular groups. In the combined light of so many candles, the colors, the black and white, the gold and purple, glow with a soft radiance. About the bright rectangle, like a dark frame around a quattrocento picture all gold and gay color, lies the dim darkness of the aisles where the ancient columns stand like watching giants. And between the columns, or moving in the dusk behind them, there is a fringe of onlookers from the town. Just a fringe, for he was not much known in the town. Yet it was not a foreigner's funeral. Born in one country, dedicated to work in another, consecrated in a third, buried in a fourth, he was a foreigner in none of them, for the Church has no frontiers and where the mother is the son is at home.

The bishop reads. One white-surpliced lad holds the book while others gather round with candles to light the page. A single voice sings, and others join. The holy water is sprinkled, the incense rises. All is done with order and seemliness, yet with a certain unstudied simplicity. The Brothers of Misericordia in an informal crowd are a solid black mass behind the bishop. The white and purple canons stand anywhere—wherever there is room for them—yet just where an artist would have placed them. It is all grave, beautiful and quiet. There is not the overwhelming sorrow that the cathedral has seen over one well-known and well-loved, dead in his prime; rather there is respect and a tender reverence.

And so the last psalm is sung and the last prayer said. The townsfolk drift away, the Brothers march off, the long train of seminarists passes out to wait in the piazza till the bishop comes out and gives them his blessing from the palace steps, and the old archbishop is left for the night with his watchers and the glimmering tapers. And through the lingering music of the Latin there steals into the memory the familiar English words to the familiar English tune:

> Father in Thy gracious keeping
> Leave we now Thy servant sleeping.

Tomorrow there will be the Solemn Requiem, pontifical, magnificent. The ancient church will be full of grave music, and the voices of young, strong men will sing the "Dies Irae" and "Agnus Dei . . . dona ei requiem sempiternam." And the worn-out body will lie in its coffin unheeding, while our old archbishop will have passed on elsewhere, the dignified prelate, the saintly priest, the faithful missionary, the good fellow, the fractious baby, all welded together in the mysterious fascia of personality to which God only has the key.

COMMUNICATIONS

"ELDEST DAUGHTER OF THE CHURCH"

Paris, France.

TO the Editor: I have just read Mr. Henry B. Binsse's letter in your issue of March 11. It betrays hopeless ignorance of the history of France during the past twenty-five years and of the present condition of the country. To point out the innumerable errors in that letter would be tedious and would require much more time than I can spare.

But it seems prodigious that anybody should write on the status of the religious orders in France without seeming to have the faintest idea that in 1901—which Mr. Binsse describes as "about 1905"—there were "authorized" as well as "unauthorized" orders, and that such orders as the Little Sisters of the Poor and the Sisters of the Assumption never had to "refuse to go." It is incredible also that Mr. Binsse should imagine that the village churches are government, instead of municipal, property.

More unbelievable than all the rest is the wholesale use of the words, "the French government," to describe the score of governments which followed that of Combes. Not to know the difference between the religious action of the Poincaré or the Tardieu Cabinets, for instance, and that of Combes, is as bad as to describe the German government at the time of Bismarck's Kultur-Kampf and under the latest chancellors, in the lump, as "the German government."

Anybody who knows anything of present conditions in France also knows that it would be unwise to give details showing to what extent the liberty of teaching, for instance, has been restored to the religious orders. So I shall refrain from giving those particulars. But as Mr. Binsse lives in Washington, he can easily obtain them from a busy but indefatigably obliging gentleman, Father Baisnée, of the Sulpician Seminary. Perhaps, after calling on him, Mr. Binsse will find himself in duty bound to write another letter correcting the errors with which the first is teeming. He must know that incorrect history is a form of slander.

REV. ERNEST DIMNET.

Boston, Mass.

TO the Editor: In your issue of March 11, a correspondent wrote a letter about France, "Eldest Daughter of the Church." What he said about my country is true in many respects. But there are a few comments I would like to make so that your readers may not get a wrong idea of conditions prevailing in France just now.

The first mistake of your correspondent is in saying that French churches are under the administration of the Fine Arts Bureau. Only a few churches, classified as *Monuments Historiques,* are placed under the Fine Arts Bureau administration. As to the others, when repairs are to be made it rests on the mayor and *conseil municipal.* Fortunately there are many Catholic mayors so there are not as many churches doomed to destruction when the cities or villages have funds, as your correspondent believes. As to the cathedrals and other churches classified as *Monuments Historiques,* I do not know if we must deplore that repairs are made by the government. In many cases it would be impossible to find funds among the Catholics to cover the enormous expenses of repairing these beautiful works of art. There are no great fortunes in France.

Your correspondent writes: "Suffice to say that the priest in France has a life of slow martyrdom." This is not true. Of

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course there are parishes where the priests are very poor and their lives are full of hardships. There are some places in France where the soil is unproductive and the people so poor that they cannot give much to support their pastors. Then in some other parts there are few Catholics. But this is not peculiar to France. I know of many places in the United States where the priests also have a life of martyrdom and are as poor as the poorest French priests. In many other cities and villages priests are in no way martyrs. They have not as much comfort as priests have here, but due to different economic conditions what is only comfort in this country is luxury in France.

How can your correspondent compare conditions in France with those existing in Russia or Mexico? Not since the Revolution of 1793 have we suffered anything like these unfortunate countries. As much as I dislike the government of my country, I must own that we Catholics enjoy more privileges than in 1905. Many convents are open again and more flourishing than ever before; so are colleges. They were not authorized to come back from exile, but although the government knows they are teaching, it leaves them alone. Before the war officers attending Mass in uniform could hardly expect being promoted. Now all this is changed. Of course conditions are far from what they should be, and God only knows what the future has in store for us. However, I feel confident that the many Catholic organizations which are gaining strength year by year will one day be strong enough to oblige the government to repeal the laws of 1901 and 1905.

ALICIE DE LA BASSETIÈRE.

GEORGIA

Savannah, Ga.

TO the Editor: In your issue of March 4, on page 487, are verses entitled "Georgia," which set forth the plaint of a chain-gang prisoner. The verses, taken in connection with the title, carry the idea that convicting innocent Negroes and killing prisoners without good reason, are typical of Georgia.

There are chain gangs in many states other than Georgia. That cruelties have been inflicted on prisoners in Georgia, just as they have been inflicted on prisoners in other states, is no doubt true. That innocent men have been convicted in Georgia, as they have been convicted in other states, is no doubt also true, but to publish verses portraying such things under the title "Georgia" is as unfair as it would be to write a poem on the murder of prisoners and entitle it "Illinois," because a few weeks ago, the officials of Joliet prison deliberately laid in wait for prisoners who, they had known for days, would seek to escape, and shot them down like dogs. In my opinion, that act was very near to cold-blooded murder, but I would not think of saying it is typical of Illinois. Or one might as truthfully write a poem on judicial corruption and entitle it "New York."

It seems to be the fashion in some circles to picture Georgia as a most undesirable member of the family of states, but I am surprised that a journal like THE COMMONWEAL should lend itself to such false propaganda. Georgia is not an ideal place in many respects, but my observation, both from reading and from travels in many of the other states, convinces me that she is neither better nor worse than the other states of the country. Certainly injustice and murder by constituted authority is as rare here as elsewhere, and the title of "Georgia" to the verses published by you is a libel upon this state, which THE COMMONWEAL should not have published in the first instance. Having published it, either wittingly or unwittingly, a suitable apology is in order.

THOMAS F. WALSH.

THE POPE'S LATIN

Pittsburgh, Pa.

TO the Editor: Now that the flood of requests for the Latin version of the radio address of Pope Pius XI is beginning to thin out, I think it is an opportune time to give you a few of the statistics of this project.

Over 2,000 requests were received by the department of Latin of the University of Pittsburgh from thirty-seven states, four Canadian provinces and one foreign country. The foreign representation was from a Benedictine Father from Nassau in the Bahamas who, strangely enough, had seen in a Catholic paper of Saskatchewan, Canada, notice of the university's offer to distribute copies of the Holy Father's Latin.

Apart from my original comments which appeared in the Pittsburgh press, in which the university's offer was mentioned, and your kind editorial notice of them, an item was carried in almost all the Catholic weeklies of the United States and Canada setting forth the university's offer to circulate copies of the Holy Father's Latin prose. Of the requests which mentioned the publications in which the writers had seen the notice, it may be of interest to you to know that THE COMMONWEAL was mentioned more often than any other publication.

More than one hundred schools and colleges, both Catholic and non-Catholic, requested from one to 275 copies apiece. Apart from queries from educational institutions those from clergy and laity were about equal in number.

ALBIN D. MCDERMOTT.

THE BIRTH CONTROL REVOLUTION

Chicago, Ill.

TO the Editor: In connection with your severe denunciation of the most unfortunate statement issued by the Protestant ministers regarding birth control, I think you will find this letter which appeared in the Chicago *Tribune,* over the signature, "Edward K. Niles, M.D.," apposite and confirmatory:

"Chicago, Ill. As a man and as a physician, I resent the following statement of the ministers of twenty-eight Protestant assemblies concerning the use of contraceptives, viz.: 'It is essential to consult the family physician.' Not all physicians are willing to teach their parishioners how to do a detestable thing. Let the clergy, who admit expert knowledge in distinguishing the true and false in contraceptives, give the instructions, and not wish it on the doctors. Family physicians, as a rule, have a conscience, so let the burden of spreading the scandal of unnatural acts rest on the heads of those who advocate this offensive form of immorality.

"Since the end justifies the means, what next? The same sophistical argument justifies criminal abortion and infanticide. Will we not, under the guidance of the clergy, soon reach that high level of Platonism where the family physician, having delivered the child, will be called upon to strangle it in order that the first-born may have a modern college education?"

M. RICHTER.

THE LITURGICAL ARTS SOCIETY

Collegeville, Minn.

TO the Editor: In the February 25 issue of THE COMMONWEAL, our Popular Liturgical Library was mentioned as including about two hundred books and pamphlets. Would that we had so many different publications! No doubt, the number twenty, which is the correct one, looked too small for the traditional imp in the print-shop.

REV. JOSEPH KREUTER, O.S.B.

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THE PLAY

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

Melo

THE FRENCH theatre has not been conspicuously stimulating during the last decade. Its plays, for the most part, have remained neatly pigeon-holed according to accepted types. They have probably been better written than the mass of American plays, but they have been far less daring in the effort to create new conventions and to establish new powers of creating illusion. This much, however, one can unreservedly say for the French—and this applies to audiences as well as to playwrights—that they know how to keep farce, comedy and tragedy distinct. When they throw decency to the winds, it is generally in the spirit of broad farce, without any spill-over into the realm of sentimental comedy. In comedy, they do not pretend, as their American copyists do, that life has no responsibilities, and that consequences need never be faced. Many of the themes of American comedy become, under the wise and clear vision of the French, stories of tragic conclusion, following a pattern woven by the experiece of life itself. This is the case with Henri Bernstein's "Melo."

"Melo" is constructed around the everlastingly familiar triangle of a husband and wife and the husband's best friend, but finds generous enrichment in the careful development of character, in the things that are conveyed rather than spoken, and in an inexorable logic which brings every thought and action to an issue and a conclusion. Romaine Belcroix, who has married a young violinist of mediocre ability, whom she loves deeply for his childish spontaneity, is deeply attracted by her husband's friend, Marcel Blanc, also a violinist, but one of international note. In time she becomes his mistress, but before he leaves on a long concert tour, she promises that before his return, she will have managed somehow to be free of her husband. From that moment on, her life becomes a torture—drawn on one side by deep affection for her husband and the fear of hurting him beyond repair, and on the other by her stormy emotional attachment for Marcel. Her mind becomes more and more hopelessly confused, until she makes the decision to poison her husband. Her attempt fails, but the horror of the situation she has created for herself becomes unbearable. She ends her own part of the problem in the River Seine, after sending her husband a pathetic note of farewell. Many playwrights including Chekov and Ibsen, would have ended the play at this point. But Bernstein knows only too well that while a single life may end, life itself and the consequences of deeds done do not end. He carries the play on two years more, into the lives of the two men whom Romaine had loved so fatally. The last scene of the play is between these two men, the husband suspecting the truth, the friend, for the husband's own sake, denying it. Although the writing of this scene is less skilful than the rest of the play, its theme is by far the most interesting and unusual part, since it traces a tragedy far deeper than the death of the bewildered woman who caused it. The last act as a whole also hints at values beyond objective tragedy, since, with the illusion he carries of Romaine's innocence, in spite of all his suspicions, Pierre Belcroix has turned from his free-thinking insouciance to a sustaining life of prayer. These values and intimated values in tragedy are beyond the scope of most of the American playwrights, at least to the extent that American authors would rarely have the courage and clarity of thought to write about them, although they are of the stuff and fiber of the experience of life as we know it.

There is another sharp and interesting distinction between this all too familiar theme as Bernstein handles it and as the majority of our own playwrights would treat it. Bernstein's characterization goes straight to universals, to essentially feminine and masculine qualities. He wastes little or no time in trying to "place" his characters within any particular environment. For that very reason they stand out clearly as individuals rather than as types. The average American dramatist of today would probably have thought it necessary to introduce substantial local "atmosphere" with the idea of rendering his characters more recognizable and familiar to the audience. It is one of the valuable parts of the French cultural tradition that such clouding of essentials is unnecessary. Bernstein does not bother to tell us who Romaine's father and mother were, nor how Romaine and Pierre first met, nor who their friends are, and the play gains enormously from this technical economy. By giving us only the essentials, he makes them count doubly as the marks of individual souls facing a simple test of loyalties.

Many of what one feels to be the rightful overtones of the play are lost in the American production, chiefly through the inept performance of Basil Rathbone as Marcel Blanc and the persistently English quality of Miss Edna Best as Romaine. Miss Best's acting, in the ordinary sense, is excellent. The part is a difficult one, due largely to the very economy of words with which Bernstein intimates motives. Miss Best does not fail the author in any essential respect. But there is a *gamine* quality written into the part which is quite native to France, and which only an artist capable of sinking into the emotional qualities of the French race could hope to achieve. Miss Best never quite ceases to be a very charming or a very pathetic or a very tragic little English girl. The fault is an excusable one and is balanced by much exceptionally fine and well-restrained work.

But there is small excuse for Mr. Rathbone's ineptitudes—for his perpetual posings, for his immaculate and exaggerated costumes, and above all for his absurd efforts of simulating violin playing. Real artists in the theatre will study for weeks to achieve authenticity in a single gesture, in the look that accompanies a certain illness, or in the proper way of handling appliances of any sort from farm implements to surgical instruments. Infinite care in detail is the artist's hall-mark. Now it is quite understandable that Mr. Rathbone could not learn to play the violin in four weeks of rehearsal, but there is no excuse for his not having acquired enough of the fundamental movements to furnish at least the illusion of playing—to have his left hand well up on the fingerboard, for example, when playing very high notes, and to have his bowing bear some relation to the phrases of the music being played off-stage. Twice, at least, his playing is supposed to set an emotional climax to a scene, and on both these occasions, Mr. Rathbone's indifference and carelessness result in a complete rupture of the intended effect—a breaking of the illusion. This would be a small matter in a stock company production, or in a minor supporting player in a large cast, but Mr. Rathbone has some pretentions to being a distinguished actor. His neglect of such points is merely typical of the lack of true artistic devotion so prevalent among a majority of present-day actors—those to whom "show business" is apparently more important than artistic integrity.

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In pleasing contrast, the work of Earle Larimore as Pierre Belcroix strikes just about the high point of his promising career. In a dozen details of costume, of gesture, and of speech, and particularly in the scene of his illness, when he is feeling the effects of slow poison, his entire performance is shot through with sincerity and the results of natural ability refined by study and hard work. Harry Davenport takes similar pains with the part of a visiting country doctor. The play has enough distinction—apart from the banality of its plot and one or two unnecessary crudities of adaptation—to merit throughout such care as Mr. Larimore and Miss Best bestow on it. Mr. Rathbone's is the only thoroughly discordant contribution. (At the Ethel Barrymore Theatre.)

The Country Wife

IT SEEMS that professional performances are now to be the rule in the auditorium of the New School (of Social Research) on West Twelfth Street. At all events, we have just had the first planned series of revivals to be given by a group known as The Fortune Players. The first selection is William Wycherley's Restoration comedy, "The Country Wife," a play in which dirt is supposed to be much less dirty than it might be because of a cleansing process known as "robust outspokenness."

This phrase is not taken from any program note. It merely sums up the spirit of advance press notices, in which the sentimental dirt of "Strictly Dishonorable" was compared unfavorably with Wycherley's blurting lewdness. Now even if we grant fully the vast difference between leering dirt and broad-mouthed vulgarity, and also admit that many jokes passed off in a tavern roll harmlessly on the sawdust floor, the burden of proof still rest with the sponsors of Restoration comedies that these comedies honestly belong in the robust tavern class. Their deliberate farce-comedy tone does lift them a step above the sentimentalized comedy and rank hypocrisy of such plays as "Strictly Dishonorable." On this point, I thoroughly agree with the English critics quoted in the advance press notices. But Wycherley's dirt is still the farthest thing from robust and honest vulgarity. It is, in the manner of nearly all Restoration pieces, an attempt to be witty about dirt, and the essence of that process is to state the worst possible things in the most indirect and suggestive manner the author can devise. The mere use of a few old-fashioned English words does not constitute robustness. It is not those words which bring snickers from a modern audience. The hysterical outbursts come with the double-meaning phrases, with the polished words and coy glances that cover the simple facts of the barnyard and pig-sty.

What I have come chiefly to detest in the modern theatre is its quality of sanctimonious primness and hypocrisy—a quality by which it uses all such shibboleths as "realism," or "sophistication," or "robust wit" to cover the simple fact that it is daring to be dirty. The most prim mid-Victorian could not find more words to cover the plain meaning of unadorned facts. For all our boasting of modern frankness, we are not frank. We simply use bolder words, but we try as hard as ever to find high-sounding excuses for what we want to do. In the name of all honesty—if we want to revive the farcical obscenities of the Restoration, let's say so. But don't let's pretend that dirt can be sterilized by a mixture of double meanings and blunt old English.

The production in this case is an exceedingly self-conscious affair in its efforts to be quaint. It is not without its moments of good work, especially by Phyllis Joyce, Doris Dalton and George Le Soir. But its pace lags seriously at times, and it utterly lacks in the playing, as in the writing, that widely advertised "robust" spirit alleged to be so powerful a disinfectant.

BOOKS

In the Wake of Symbolism

Axel's Castle, by Edmund Wilson. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.50.

NO FIELD of criticism offers more difficulties than that of contemporary literature, and few critics are alert enough to perceive the new relations between the ever-changing phenomena they are studying. Mr. Wilson brings to his subject erudition, a keen logical mind and freshness of vision. Free from prejudices and wary of clichés, he remains ever remarkably independent and original in his judgments. He considers the literary history of our time to be largely "that of the development of symbolism and of its fusion or conflict with naturalism." With the symbolist movement of the late nineteenth century he links up W. B. Yeats, Paul Valéry, T. S. Eliot, Proust, Joyce and Gertrude Stein.

Of these six highly significant figures, all but one of whom are alive today, two are French, two Irish, and two American. But all, even if they do not actually work there, derive their influence from Paris. Yeats and Valéry definitely began in the symbolist tradition, the one under the tutelage of Arthur Symons, the other in Mallarmé's salon. Eliot's early poems reflected Corbière and Laforgue as much as the Elizabethans, and Gertrude Stein has carried Mallarmé's principles of "pure poetry" to the point of absurdity. "Joyce, a master of naturalism as great as Flaubert, has at the same time succeeded in dramatizing symbolism by making use of its methods for differentiating between his various characters and their varying states of mind," while Proust has achieved the indefiniteness of music and composed a symphonic novel by replacing the poet's shifting images with his own set of recurrent and interlocking characters, episodes and places. Furthermore, like Villiers de l'Isle Adam's "Axel" lost in the depths of the Black Forest, these latter-day symbolists have fashioned for themselves and their heroes lives apart from the world about them. Yeat's "Alchemical Temple" and lonely towers on the Irish coast are paralleled by Proust's cork-lined room hermetically closed to all exterior impressions; and Valéry's M. Teste, symbol of the pure intellect lost in the contemplation of his own thought processes, is surpassed only by his own creator. Finally we get H. C. Earwicker, Joyce's new hero, who sleeps through a whole novel.

Despite the originality of this excellent thesis, Mr. Wilson is not carried away by it to the point of doing injustice to his subjects. On the contrary, each of these individual studies can well stand as an adequate criticism of the writer under discussion. His treatment of Valéry and Proust is unsurpassed, in English. Mr. Wilson is among the first to indicate the similarities between Proust and Dickens and the rather-Jewish-than-French tone of moral indignation which runs through "A la recherche du temps perdu." He has also recognized the significance of Proust's emphasis upon sadism and his subtle identification of Vinteuil with the narrator's mother and grandmother and his consequent theory that only in artistic creation may we atone for the vicious perversity of ourselves and those about us. This idea, repeatedly illustrated by the lives of Vinteuil and his daughter, Bergotte, Charlus and Morel, and finally the narrator, forms one of the major themes of that great work, and two years ago Marie-Anne Cochet traced and elaborated it in her "L'Ame Proustienne." Mr. Wilson gives a severe but intelligent verdict on Valéry's prose and the overelaboration of symbols in "Ulysses" and Joyce's unfinished novel.

In the concluding pages of "Axel's Castle" is "the glance

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toward the future." Mr. Wilson is rather premature in his belief that this literature has killed itself through its very divorce from the reality of the contemporary world and that these writers, "though we shall continue to admire them as masters, will no longer serve us as guides." It is futile to look to Russia and her "central social-political idealism" when there lies at hand a permanent, already-tried source of inspiration which knows no national boundaries. But these suggestions appear to be made merely to confuse the reader with the illusion that he can take his choice among a group of possible solutions; while Mr. Wilson returns to the achievements of his symbolists:

"Our conceptions of objective and subjective have unquestionably been based on false dualisms; our materialisms and idealisms alike have been derived from mistaken conceptions of what the researches of science implied—classicism and romanticism, naturalism and symbolism are, in reality, therefore, false alternatives. And so we may see naturalism and symbolism combine to provide us with a vision of human life and its universe, richer, more subtle, more complex and more complete than any that man has yet known—indeed, they have already so combined, symbolism has already joined naturalism, in one great work of literature, 'Ulysses.' "

This is at least, then, one possible way out of the tower of ivory into which the imaginative literature of the past fifty years has withdrawn—out of the decadent atmosphere of Axel's isolated castle and back to contact with reality.

JUSTIN O'BRIEN.

Poets of the Day

Adamastor, by Roy Campbell. New York: Dial Press. $2.50.

Early Poems, by Humbert Wolfe. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Incorporated. $2.50.

Vale, by A. E. New York: The Macmillan Company. $1.50.

Green River, by James Whaler. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.00.

Best Poems of 1930; selected by Thomas Moult. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.50.

White April, by Lizette Woodworth Reese. New York: Farrar and Rinehart. $1.50.

Ploughed Earth, by Claude Colleer Abbott. New York: Richard R. Smith, Incorporated. $1.50.

WITH "Adamastor" to add to "The Flaming Terrapin," we are now in some position to pass judgment upon Roy Campbell. He has been called the new romantic, and that perhaps is the fairest description of him; like many other romantics, he is at his best in a classical form, into which he will pour all sorts of pagan angers and inward searchings of the spirit. But what is the difference, to most of us, between classical and romantic? Is it not, perhaps a little too often, merely a difference between what is reserved and what is indiscreet? At any rate, we might try and give Campbell a closer definition, and say that he is a modern puritan, a puritan of ideas, a hater of sentiment, affectation and sweetness. (He is a South African, be it remembered, and South Africans in general are incurably sentimental in their spare moments.)

He is, without question, one of the most vigorous poets of today, having an almost overwhelming power of words; and austere enough and intelligent enough to be able to direct this power along certain straight and narrow channels of thought when he has a mind to do so. His best poetry, full of a strange and beautiful imagery, is the result of an enormous conflict between what is austere in him and what is sensuous—the dilemma of many poets, it is true, but especially the dilemma of the puritan. His worst poetry is a loud noise, a great shout of self-praise; it is rhetoric after the manner of Cleon, and satire after the manner of Marston; it is a colossal vigor without austerity, and a vast appetite without discrimination. If his best work is full of clean sense, his worst is not sense at all; if his best is full of pain and pride, his worst is arrogant and offensive; if his best images are compelling and beautiful, his worst are childish and vacant.

There is good reason for this discrepancy. For there are two kinds of puritans—those who are justly angered by other men's abuse of what they know to be good and pleasant, who take a pleasure in seeking its barren and forbidding opposite, who clean their house with anger and scorn and a kind of blasphemy; and those who "compound for sins they are inclined to by damning those they have no mind to" . . . and some that they have a mind to as well. When Campbell schools his tremendous and rather wonderful vigor with a love of ideas, with an austerity of the senses, he writes what is to my mind great poetry; when he indulges his love of himself by having a fling at humanity and by letting his imagination run amuck in a flood of words and unrelated images, he seems still to be in the shouting stage of adolescence. You may say that his faults are the faults of a poet, and that is true—but let a poet indulge his faults to the point of being unable to criticize himself, and he is lost. Consider Mr. Humbert Wolfe.

If Mr. Campbell's weakness is a bellow, Mr. Wolfe's is a trill, and if he were not at his worst the most melodious of poets one would have to call that trill a twitter. Once upon a time he promised to be the most important of the younger poets, but with the publication of that very uneven book "Requiem," several years ago, the whole of England conspired to ruin him with praise. Only the *Criterion,* as I remember, raised a dissentient voice, and with his cohorts behind him Mr. Wolfe could afford to neglect its warning. Mr. Wolfe, the *Criterion* remarked, should not serve up his flint in aspic: Mr. Wolfe retorted by thereafter leaving out the flint. Today, as critic and essayist, he is an intelligent and exciting writer, as a satirist he has his moments and even periods, but as a lyric poet he appears to be already in Elysium . . . or at least as near Elysium as Narcissus went who never knew when he had died. In these "Early Poems" we are given an opportunity to read a poet whom none had praised, who was still seeking a difficult perfection, who did not believe his every word to be distilled Pierian, and who gave every here and there glimpses of something more than talent.

In the body poetic, I suppose, the cardinal sin of *luxuria* is simply a yielding to the easiest expression: just as Campbell yields to "terrible sour lichens" and such, and Wolfe to melody without meaning, so A. E. sins with too much indulgence of the bardic vision. By this I mean no disrespect to one of the most considerable of the Irish poets, and one of the greatest figures in modern Ireland. There are two sides to "Vale." On the one hand you will find a very simple and very beautiful lyric poetry: on the other a poet who is too free with "poetical" words and easy images, with the impulse but not the progess of mysticism, with kind thoughts and colored twilights. This side notwithstanding, few living poets have given more pleasure than A. E., or deserved more praise, or are more certain of remembrance long after we are dead and forgotten.

"Green River" is a narrative poem, telling the story of the Italian botanist Raffinesque, and telling it in rhyme. The rhymed narrative poem is at once the clearest and the most cruel test of a poet's worth, leaving us far too often with just a barren admiration for the ingenuity with which it gets itself out of tight

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corners. Mr. Whaler comes out of his test pretty well, in spite of the unevenness of much of his work. The strength of his line is often allied with a curious subtlety, and informed with a remote and tense imagination; but it is sometimes cloyed with intricately honeyed words; and it sometimes steps like an indelicate Agag into all sorts of predicaments—

> ". . . roars of the crew
> Unnerved the night: 'Race Rocks! Race Rocks! to-oo
> The boats.' "

a device at which Lord Byron, in his most ingenious moments, would probably have winced. At times, too, Mr. Whaler's indiscretions are *affected* indiscretions, than which nothing is more fashionable or more tiresome. But his danger generally seems to lie in the lushness and the pulp of a fancy run to fat —and if he avoids that and cultivates his virtues, which are the virtues of a quite remarkable imagination, he should go far.

Thomas Moult, generous and valuable as his enthusiasm is, has something of the "noblest Roman" about him—not only in his stern yearly challenge of the world with Beauty, but in his rather patrician disregard for the full meaning of the word. But at least his anthologies have a sense of direction and an effect that must, on the whole, be far more salutary than otherwise. There remain two poets of the country—Miss Reese, to whom I shall always be grateful for her single and uncommon experiences before common things, and Mr. Abbott who dedicates his book to Geoffrey Chaucer. Mr. Abbott writes that kind of literature which never rises to the status of poetry, never sinks to the level of verse, and of which Edmund Blunden is the most eminent exponent. "Ploughed Earth," however, has such freshness and such devotion that it would be a pity to disfigure it with labels or trouble it with nice distinctions. May he give us more.

GEORGE DANGERFIELD.

Lurid

Lenin, God of the Godless, by Ferdinand Ossendowski. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, Incorporated. $3.25.

THIS is a deliberately horrible book. There is simply a bald statement of events which run the gamut of every conceivable atrocity. It is Gargantuan in its disproportions and repetitions. This monstrousness at first seems possibly a vice of the author's mind. Especially is this first impression given because the book is written in that modern pseudo-biographical form in which the writer gives no documentation to support his assertions about the lives of real persons, and he puts into their mouths speeches at his own sweet will. Considering that Ossendowski is a Pole, and that Lenin and Soviet Russia are anathema to him, the illusion of life—the verisimilitude to an aggregate, comprehensive truth, rather than to its component parts—is rather restrained by the suspicion of bias. Then the sheer power of the writer prevails. The sheer bulk of his assertions prevails. The detached complacency of a reader reading about distant events is shattered and one at last is forced to contemplate what the realities of the Russian Revolution must have been.

On reflection, in perspective, the scenes persist vividly like little illuminated peep-shows, or chambers of horrors. It is doubtful if this mind's eye view of the events could have been achieved by any other method. The distractions of documentation and of giving reasons for a conclusion, would never permit of such an effect. It is obviously a dangerous method, and as it is easy reading and sensational it will therefore achieve a wide

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public who will read it only for its sensations. Of course truth can be distorted in a thoroughly documented treatise by the selection of documents and context. There is however some chance of running these lapses to ground and countering them with specific instances. It would be a weary business to counter fiction with facts. One must estimate Mr. Ossendowski's work on the unstable grounds of the probabilities of the scenes he describes and the total impression he creates.

Anyone who has been a reporter on police cases in a metropolitan city, will from experience give full credence to the probabilities of this book. He will have seen the debaucheries and crime that humans who despise morality, are capable of even under relatively stable social conditions. Anyone who has not had this experience, may verify the fact by a casual glance through the yellow journals that wallow in news of perversities and murders. It is therefore altogether conceivable that a social revolution in which the leaders appeal to the all too human emotions of greed, envy, lust and anger, encourage murder and rapine to satisfy the repressed appetites of illiterate and poverty-bitten masses and trick them into belief in a heaven on earth of material satisfactions, would produce the excesses Ossendowski describes. The megalomania of the boss, Lenin, unbalanced in his youth by precocious insights into man's inhumanity to man and vowing a personal revenge when his own brother is executed by the czar, is a credibly motivated development of character. His maniac fixation of ideas and final disillusion make a stirring and tragic narrative. The chaos, the ruin and the hate he brings upon his people, have been concomitants of revolution in nearly all periods. The idea that social injustices can be solved by a change in social system, rather than by the everlasting struggle to weed evil from the heart of the individual and substitute a love of God, is shown to be a forlorn hope. The book is no whitewash of the czarist system, or the capitalist system, or any system per se. It is a case study of the beastliness and hopelessness of a people with no aim or justice higher than the satisfaction of carnal desires. The single ray of hope that it offers is the suggestion that these periodical mass excesses of a people are necessary to prove the degeneracy that follows living for the body alone, and that they reëmphasize the value of the pure spirit. This is an equivocal hope. From one point of view, it would seem to suggest that the way to salvation is through sin. This is an old heresy, which is especially exciting and dangerous to youth. It certainly must be said of this book that it is not for the young. But for those who can face horrors, it portrays the ghastly truth of the attempt to slay the soul of Russia.

FREDERIC THOMPSON.

Two Wives

Plagued by the Nightingale, by Kay Boyle. New York: Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith, Incorporated. $2.50.

Ambrose Holt and Family, by Susan Glaspell. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company. $2.50.

TAKEN together, these two novels make a peculiarly interesting study. Each presents an unusual marital situation from the angle of the wife, and the identity of device points the difference between them with a clearness that mere comparison does not often achieve. These differences are important, and have little to do with the fact that Miss Boyle's subject is an international marriage working itself out in France, while Miss Glaspell's is the native American article. They may be expressed, perhaps, by saying that Miss Boyle has written a temperamental tragedy and Miss Glaspell a philosophic comedy.

"Plagued by the Nightingale" is a product of that mood which envisages human beings as remote from help, as treasurably pitiful and beautiful in their helplessness: a mood more proper to poetry than to dramatic or philosophic prose, since the full human pattern rarely sustains it. It necessitates here a definite bias of interpretation all the more evident for being unconscious. Miss Boyle apparently supposes she is showing us a candid, hopeful American girl beaten at last by the wicked old order in the shape of her French husband's family. What we actually see is the complication and suffering that follow deviation from integrity. Bridget marries Nicolas knowing that he is tainted by a disease from which no male of his line has ever escaped. They resolve to remain childless. The story tells how his people apply the economic lever to break down their resolution and, in succeeding, also break down their love. The study of the corporate self-interest which prompts the family is fascinating and merciless; but it should not be extended, as Miss Boyle extends it, to cover the implication that Bridget is an innocent victim. She is guilty, not merely according to the moral code she does not accept, which would have forbidden her to marry Nicolas, but according to her own lights, which forbid her to bear his child. That she and Nicolas will be thrown out penniless if she refuses, merely defines the issue. It is the point of principles that they have to be paid for.

But I must not give an unfair impression of the book. If the drawback of Miss Boyle's poetic aptitude is seen in this static, predetermined element in her story, its positive side is felt in the intensity with which she conceives most of her characters, the genuine passion with which she makes their emotions her own; in what one must call the distinguished sensitiveness that she brings to bear upon scenes and atmospheres; in the marked beauty of much of the writing. The episode of Charlotte's death has the true essence of tragedy; and there is an exultant picture of the tide flooding a world of islands and surging up the bed of a river, which is as fine as any description to be found anywhere.

Miss Glaspell has never achieved a more delicate, or a more difficult, triumph than in "Ambrose Holt and Family." She has taken material which might be generally considered *fade* and conventional, and has very freshly and expertly brought it to life; more, without any tricks or forcing, she induces it to yield a type of wisdom of which it is certainly not the traditional vehicle. Blossom Holt is fixed, one would say, much more helplessly in a particular destiny than Miss Boyle's Bridget. She is beautiful and nurtured to a beautiful uselessness; the only daughter of a rich man; the adoring wife of a successful man; the loving mother of his children; the flawless mistress of his home. And that is all—or almost all. Whatever she has besides, it is not a brilliant intellect or a call to the larger life. Yet somehow, and quite credibly, she manages to stage an awakening and a revolt. She makes out the fact that her husband is an egomaniac who feeds on martyrdom; that her father is a choleric tyrant; that her father-in-law—a family deserter and ne'er-do-well whose name is never spoken by her people—is a wise soul, almost a great one. More, though the limpid candor with which she confronts these discoveries for a time endangers the whole secure structure of her life, she manages to save it in the end. Being loving as well as honest, she reclaims love without compromising essential truth. Blossom knows a cure for fate, and it is a measure of the value of the book that we are completely persuaded of it. There is an extraordinary, unmalicious acuteness in the drawing of the characters, and great charm in the writing.

MARY KOLARS.

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Coronado's Children

Coronado's Children, by J. Frank Dobie. Dallas, Texas: The Southwest Press. $3.00.

THE SUBTITLE, "Lost Mines and Buried Treasures of the Southwest," gives the key to Mr. Dobie's collection of folk-tales. The title is taken from the earliest of the Midas mirages which lured the Spanish conquistadores into what is now Texas, New Mexico and Arizona. Their imagination inflamed by the wealth of gold discovered in Mexico and raped from the simple Indians, it was easy for the first explorers of northern New Spain to believe the least scrap of legend pointing to the fabled seven cities and their treasures of gold and silver and turquoise. "If they did not find the riches of which they had been told," says Casteñada," they found a place in which to search for them."

It is of this search, which they handed on to their American successors, that Mr. Dobie tells. He begins with the alleged discoveries of free gold on the San Saba River in eastern Texas in 1756, and moves on west to the Colorado, and across it as far as Death Valley, including the lost mines of Gunsite, Peg-leg and Bryfogle. As was natural, closest attention is given to Texas and the east bank of the Rio Grande, directly under the author's eye, the legends thinning out in numbers as they are the further removed. Actually throughout the whole Southwest wherever gold has been discovered, are similar tales of rich mines glimpsed, marked, reported upon and never found again.

The buried treasures relate chiefly to riches hastily concealed from hostile Indian raids and bandits, of which the historic background provided ample supply. There were, throughout the Spanish régime, long trains of supply wagons going north from Mexico City with coin to pay the soldiers and officials of remote presidios and Villas Real. Along with these were often chest loads of church furnishings of silver and gold. And for the return trips there were mule loads of gold and silver bullion, going down to the capital to be coined. Along the Rio Grande there are many dramatic stories of hurried concealments and subsequent failures to recover the booty, which one misses from Mr. Dobie's account. Another source of buried treasure tales was the old Spanish Trail from Mexico City to New Orleans, along which fled many wealthy families, with all they could carry, during the period between the secession of Mexico from Spain and the War with Mexico. Not infrequently family plate and jewels were buried where bandits threatened or transportation gave out.

Mr. Dobie has made a competent collection of characteristic legends. He has apparently tried to concentrate on the tales that may have had a germ of actuality. But he does not omit those that must have originated either in the delirium of thirst and fatigue of desert trail, or in pure imagination. In New Mexico are many lost mines which never could have existed elsewhere than at the bottom of the sheepherder's bottle. Such tales as the two million buried by the James gang near Wichita must have come into being solely out of man's strange, undefeated desire that treasure should be.

"Coronado's Children" is a book that most Americans will wish to read, because the dream that wealth is to be found merely by seeking is still nearest to the human heart. There is a profound truth concealed under these persistent images of treasure available to the seeing eye. Story-telling is one of man's ways of explaining the universe to himself. What story is symbolized under the myth of buried gold, remains for the historian of the secret places of the heart to reveal.

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NEXT WEEK

On May 15, 1891, Pope Leo XIII published his encyclical letter on the condition of the working classes. It is a most comprehensive and well-balanced plan for the solution of our many difficulties, and for the restoration of that peace of spirit which springs from justice and is the only truly abiding worldly happiness. THE COMMONWEAL is therefore, in its first issue in May, recognizing this event with a distinguished article on the subject of the encyclical, VOICES IN THE DESERT, by Selden Peabody Delany. This is a broad enquiry into the application of the encyclical's proposals by leaders of men throughout the world today. . . . SCIENCE BECOMES SUBMISSIVE, by the Reverend Adolph Dominic Frenay, O.P., is a survey of science's contribution of fact to the intellectual proof of the existence of God. . . . A CENTENARY OF SERMONS, by the Reverend Daniel M. O'Connell, S.J., is a delightfully literary paper on one of the most literary, yet alive, preachers of all times—Cardinal Newman. . . . TEN TUNES, by Frances Boardman, is an analysis of some familiar melodies which, the writer says, if taught to a little child (which many of us still are in the presence of music) would give "an all but impregnable base for the subsequent development of sound musical taste.". . . CATHOLIC ACTIVITIES IN JAPAN, by the Reverend Johannes Laures, S.J., tells that Catholic schools are the hope of the Church in the Land of the Rising Sun, and of the good progress of these schools. . . . Dr. Edward Robert Moore's series of articles on BIRTH CONTROL will skip the next issue in order to give him time to consolidate some of the correspondence and reactions to the articles which have appeared. The final article, which will be in the issue after next, will be a summary of matters developed so far and of the fundamental concepts issuing from them.

Religion Rationalized

Religions of the World: Their Nature and Their History, by Carl Clemen, in collaboration with eleven authorities; translated by Reverend A. K. Dallas. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $4.50.

PROFESSOR CLEMEN divides the religions of the world into four sections: "Prehistoric Religion"; "Primitive Religion"; "Ancient National Religions"; and "The World Religions." While the first two sections are treated briefly, the bulk of the work is contained in the last two sections. As "Ancient National Religions," the author deals with the Babylonian, Egyptian, Chinese, Indian, Persian, Greek and Roman, Celtic, Teutonic, Slavic and Japanese religions. By "World Religions," he understands the religion of the Hebrews, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam. The work is richly illustrated and contains an index, and a bibliography at the end of each chapter.

The various chapters have been written by about eleven different writers, for the greater part professors in German universities. Though the plan of the whole work has been well laid out, it is to be expected in a book of this type that each chapter breathes the spirit of the personality of the particular writer. Though the present volume is a scholarly work, it is to be regretted that its spirit is pronouncedly "modernistic" in dealing with religion and "evolutionistic" in the interpretation of the facts and data. To dispatch at once the chapter on "Christianity," it suffices to say that a more modernistic paper could not have been written. To the author, Christianity is only the product of evolution. He traces the origin of Christianity to Oriental religion, thought and mysteries. The mission of Christ is interpreted according to the most rationalistic fashion reflecting the crassest errors of Harnack. Catholicism is to the author the mediaeval, material stage in the evolution of Christianity, while Protestantism is the further developed form of Christianity. A most rationalistic spirit pervades the whole chapter.

Lack of space prevents a detailed analysis of the various chapters, which are written mostly in the same rationalistic spirit. No wonder, then, that when dealing with the religion of ancient Egypt, the writer has not understood the noble philosophy of Akhnaton, the Pharaoh who aimed to bring his people back to the belief in the one true God.

Rightly the religions of the world are treated in two sections on "Prehistoric Religion" and "Primitive Religion." Here too, a completely rationalistic spirit prevails. The theories of animism, of magic, of mana and of naturalism are each in their turn declared responsible for the rise of religion. Of course, all these theories would offer a perfect solution of the problem of the origin of religion, if all the preconditions, upon which they are based, were solidly sound. But Professor Clemen becomes conscious that he has put his foot on unsolid ground, for he begins to express himself in the conditional form: "If this is the case, then. . . " or "probably it *may* have been. . . " or "may perhaps be inferred. . . " or "most probable." Of course, this carefulness is good scientific form. But what will happen if only one of all the many preconditions are not fulfilled. A collapse, and nothing less, of the whole system will follow. Where there exists a conditional form, there are at least two sides to the problem. One is the conditional side, introduced by the "if," which was taken up by the author. But the other side of the problem was never considered by him. It is not so much the personal fault of the author but that of the school of evolution, of which Clemen is a follower. And this school of evolution has good reason to maintain silence,

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for a consideration of the other, unconditional side of the problem would lead them straight into the fold of the Scholastic School. And what are the factors responsible for the origin of religion, according to the Scholastic School? The two factors are the law of casuality and tradition. And both lead man directly back to his God and Creator.

On account of the dangerous theories found throughout the book, this work of Clemen cannot conscientiously be recommended to the layman. On the other hand, the experienced student of ethnology and anthropology, acquainted with the errors of evolution, will find in this volume a rich collection of material and data.

ADOLPH DOMINIC FRENAY.

South American Travels

Green Hell, by Julian Duguid. New York: The Century Co. $4.00.

W. H. HUDSON saw the South American jungle as a beneficent home for a fabulous lost race; Julian Duguid regards that same welter of tropical vegetation as a "gigantic and terrible personality." Hudson wrote about the wilds of Venezuela and lands beyond, which may or may not have been real. Duguid, although he writes about the comparatively small section of the jungle between the Paraguay River and the Bolivian mountains, applies his term to that entire colossal block of forest: "Shaped like a human body it stands four-square on top of Argentina. Its trunk is Brazil and Paraguay and eastern Bolivia, its far-flung shoulders dip into two oceans at Ecuador and Pernambuco, and its scraggy neck twists at Panama into the republics of Central America. At its widest it stretches without break the distance between Labrador and Liverpool, or Southampton and Suez."

Yet, though the moods of the two writers are antithetical, the reader familiar with "Green Mansions" and "Purple Lands" will recognize the identity of setting. And Mr. Duguid's work is no less brilliant. Everywhere one is made to share intensely in the experiences of that small band of explorers pushing their way through the Chaco, the little-known triangle of territory between the Paraguay and Pilcomayo Rivers. At the time of the expedition, the Chaco leaped into world prominence. Bolivia and Paraguay hotly advanced their claims, and the streets of La Paz and Asuncion echoed with demands for war. The history of that quarrel has already been written—for the author and his companions the dissension provided but one more potential menace. This menace did not materialize but others did, and the tale of their surmounting provides thrilling reading in the annals of intrepidity and gallant obliviousness to suffering.

Barely penetrable as is the Chaco, history was not only in the making but had already been made there. René Fülöp-Miller, in his "The Power and Secrets of the Jesuits," penned a eulogistic account of the Jesuit settlement there, an account which THE COMMONWEAL published as "The Kingdom of God in Paraguay." Mr. Duguid found ample evidence of the idealistic civilization which the Jesuits had patiently assisted the natives in erecting, and lends further heart-sickening testimony to prove the tragic plight which befell the natives when the Spanish king expelled their beloved benefactors. Churches remain in Santo Corazón, Santa Cruz and in lesser villages but they are now guarded by caciques, appointed as jealous custodians by the natives who treasure tangible symbols of a past faith now heavy with the barnacles of pagan practice. For with the corruption of faith came loss of most of those fundamental characteristics which flowered into a unique civilization.

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The accuracy of Mr. Duguid's observations on this phase of historical fact is unfortunately not found in his ready acceptance of the legends which surround the Spanish conquest of South America and the death of the Inca, Atahualpa. Actually Ambassador Merry del Val turns aside in his eloquent foreword of praise to deplore "an account of Atahualpa's death notoriously concocted by Spain's untiring detractors." This repetition of the malice of certain historians, however, is but a minor lapse in a volume which makes few pretensions to be other than what it is—a book of travel. It is lavishly illustrated and beautifully mounted, and gains added interest from the fact that Seimel, one of the original party, is now guiding a larger and more scientific expedition into the jungle of Matto Grosso which lies in Brazil immediately to the east of the Chaco.

JOHN GILLAND BRUNINI.

A New England Artist

John Elliott: The Story of an Artist, by Maud Howe Elliott. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. $7.50.

THERE is one line in the "Battle Hymn of the Republic" that comes to mind, in considering this story by the daughter of its author, Samuel Greeley Howe: "Be swift my soul to follow him, be jubilant my feet." It is as though that was the command of Maud Howe Elliott, where art and beauty is at hand. Her husband was an artist, with color as she is with words, and the story of his life as she tells it relates not only the struggles and triumphs of a soul seeking always to attain the highest, but is a moving picture of life during the last half century, as lived in the Old World and the New. It begins in England, and leads us into the courts and ateliers of Spain, but mostly it is of Rome where the artist did his best work. His paintings hang in museums in Italy, Spain, France and America.

The studio in which he accomplished the ceiling that is now part of the Boston Public Library, the "Triumph of Time," was in the Palazzo Giraud Torlonia, in the Vatican quarters, where Cardinal Wolsey had lived when a papal legatee. "A great barracks of a place," says Maud Howe, a bride at the time. "A garden went with it, and here lived a tortoise, a falcon, and a nightingale named Pan."

Not far from the studio was their home, at the top of the Palazzo Rusticucci. Raphael himself had once lived here. And now an aged priest, Don Marcello, lived on the first floor and owned the Etrsuscan figures that decked the landings where the Elliotts would rest as they mounted to their own quarters. From thence they looked "down into the Square of St. Peter's, where the cloud shadows drift and wind blows the spray of the twin fountains. . . and make a rainbow on either side of the noble façade of the greatest church in Christendom."

At the Palazzo Rusticucci was a terrace that John Elliott worked in, aided by his wife when she was with him, encouraged by her when she was away. It was a mass of passion flower and rose and lily and everything exquisite that grows. They were aided by a cook who had "an insatiable need of self-expression." "Our windows looked into the Pope's," writes Mrs. Elliott, "and when sophisticated Roman-Americans exclaimed: 'Why do you live in the Borgo? Nobody lives there.' Jack always replied: 'Nobody but the Popes and the Elliotts.' "

When in New York, they were the first to settle in what is now Greenwich Village, and of this place Mrs. Elliott talks as enchantingly as she does of Boston, Newport, the hills of New Hampshire and every section of the country where her cosmopolitan foot has trod. Her book is of universal interest.

LOUISE HUBERT GUYOL.

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